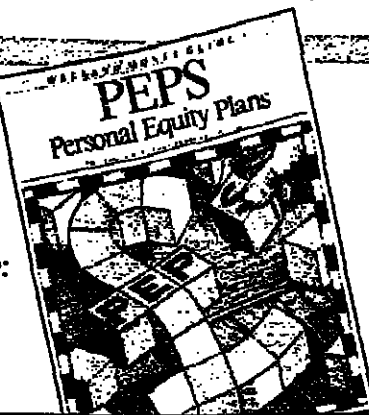
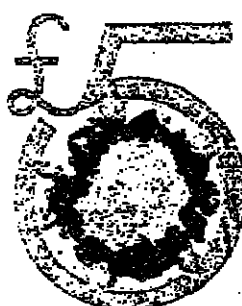


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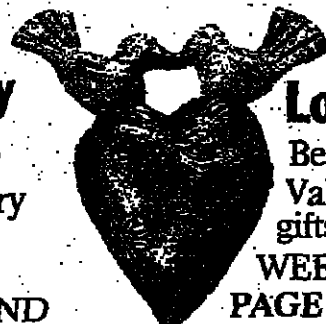
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Details and voucher
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Swoon songs
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A celebrity writes...
How a starry bestseller is born
WEEKEND



Love it?
Best Valentine gifts
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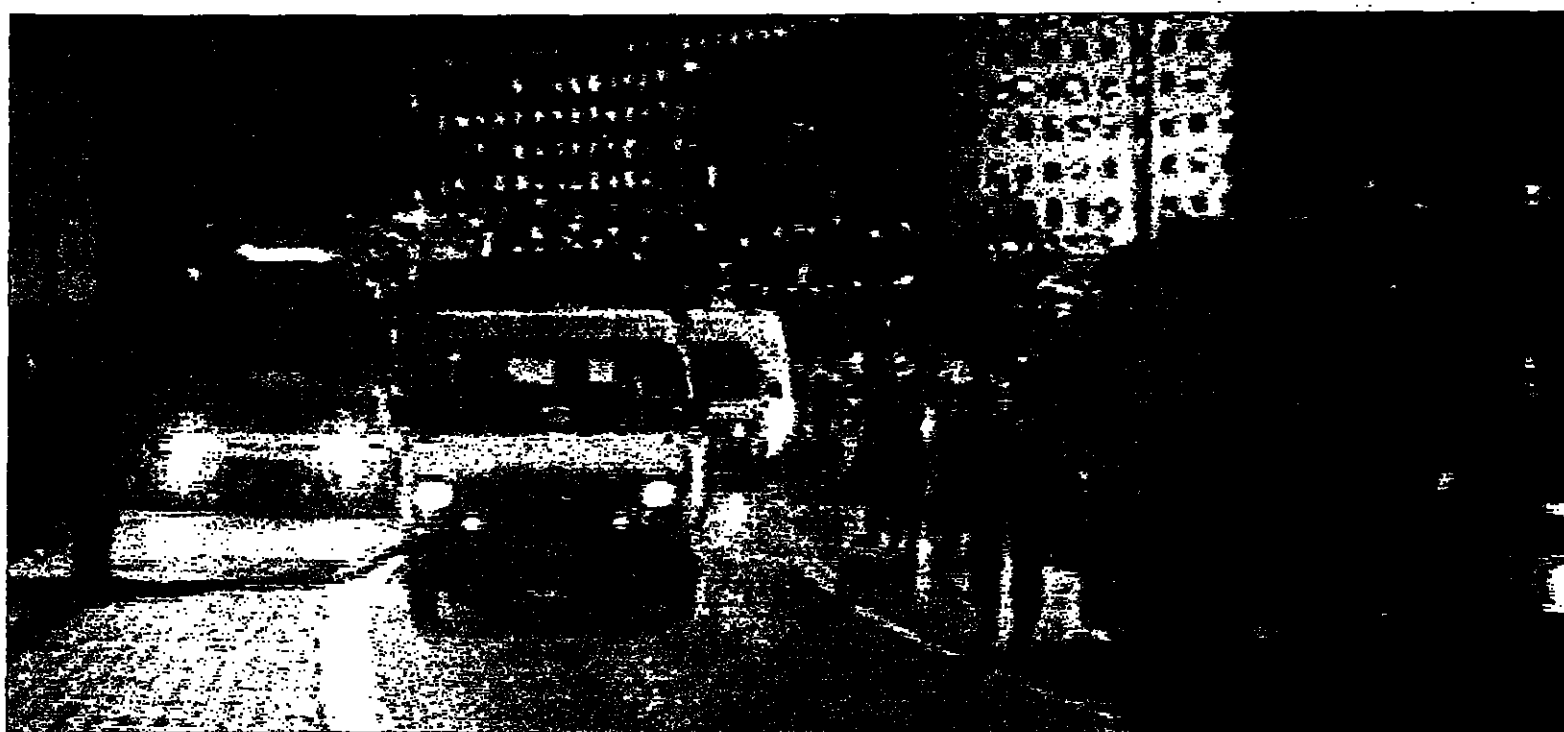
Many feared injured in South Quay explosion after Dublin coded warning

Bomb ends IRA ceasefire

Rush-hour blast at Docklands railway station

By Andrew Pierce and Nicholas Watt

THE IRA ceasefire appeared to be in tatters last night after a huge bomb exploded on London's Isle of Dogs as thousands of office workers were making their way home. Hospitals had to treat more than a hundred casualties, a handful of them seriously hurt, after the blast at the South Quay Docklands Light Railway station near the Canary Wharf office block tower. A breakaway group of the IRA was believed to have been responsible for the explosion at one minute past seven. Homes and offices were evacuated and dozens of fire engines and firefighters descended on the scene from all four corners of the capital. Residents poured into the streets as the force of the blast blew out their windows. RTE, the Irish national broadcasting network, said that it had received a coded statement in Dublin from the



Rescuers at the scene of the bomb blast at South Quay station last night. The station had been evacuated after a telephoned bomb threat

IRA warning that "with great reluctance" the ceasefire that began on August 31, 1994, would end at 6pm. The statement added that blame for the failure of the peace process lay "squarely with John Major and his Government". The ceasefire had presented an historic challenge, but the British Government had acted in bad faith. Sinn Féin, however, claimed to know nothing of the statement and there was a question mark over whether the IRA had in fact called off its ceasefire or whether it was the action resulting from a split in the organisation. The police and a national newspaper had also received telephone warnings and the South Quays station had been evacuated an hour before the blast. Police had sealed off the area and stopped all trains. The power of the bomb shook the huge Canary Wharf

Tower and could be heard eight miles away. One worker in the block said: "There was a big thumping roar near the building. Everyone is extremely shocked and there are fire alarms going off." Another said: "The whole building shook. Dust came down from the ceiling. It was a deafening rumble." A woman employee at the London Docklands Development Corporation said: "The windows were blown out. It felt like a hurricane blowing through." Greta Sapwell, 24, who was sitting in the Henry Addington public house a few hundred yards from the blast, said: "I have never heard anything like it. It was incredibly loud. Three windows fell in top of us. Reaction was

surprisingly calm. We were shocked. But the rest of the pub remained in control." Sir High Annesley, the RUC Chief Constable, gave a warning only last weekend that the IRA might resume bombing and said the mainland would be the main target. At least one active service unit has remained on the British mainland throughout the ceasefire and M15, Special Branch and police have been monitoring IRA cells, reconnoitring possible sites for attacks since the ceasefire. Scotland Yard and other police headquarters have been constantly updated on the IRA threat, but these assessments have been scaled down from weekly to monthly. Commander John Greive, the new head of the anti-terrorist

TODAY

IN BRITAIN'S FASTEST-GROWING QUALITY NEWSPAPER

Simon Jenkins on
Cézanne, the blockbuster
Page 20

Rob Andrew:
England, rugby and me
Page 48

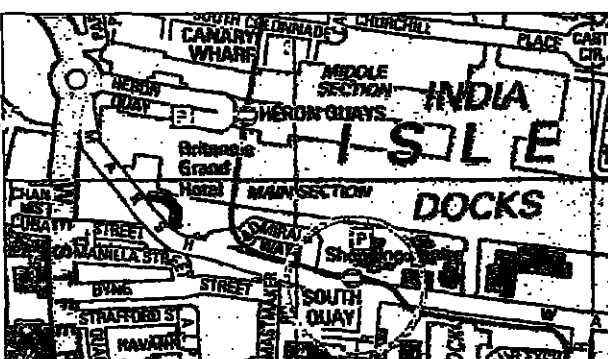
Valerie Grove
meets
Sir Richard Scott
Page 6

Rob Hughes on
Zola Budd, back on the fast track
Page 43

● Sales of The Times have reached a new high with an average of 887,992 per day in January, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation.

● The record circulation represents an increase of almost 8 per cent year-on-year.

● Average daily sales of The Times for the six months from August 1995 to January 1996 were 673,269, up 10.53 per cent year-on-year.



Guppy sues the Mirror

Darius Guppy, the society fraudster who was released from jail earlier this week, is suing the Mirror Group for failing to honour a £75,000 contract to buy his life story. His solicitors issued the writ the High Court yesterday, claiming that the Daily Mirror had reneged on an agreement to publish his story after their chief executive, David Montgomery, had veiled the deal. Mr Montgomery, "considered £75,000 to be an excessive sum", the writ said. The Daily Mirror said last night that it would strenuously defend itself against the writ. The action is bound to reopen the controversy about media payments to convicted criminals. Mr Guppy, a declared bankrupt who was convicted of £1.8 million insurance fraud served only three years of a five-year sentence.

The Times on the Internet
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Australia \$20, Belgium £18, Canada \$25, Caribbean £10, Cyprus £12, Denmark Dkr 180, Finland Fmk 1700, France F 1400, Germany DM 450, Gibraltar Gp 500, Greece Dr 500, Netherlands Fl 450, Ireland Ir£ 20, Italy L 160, Japan ¥1500, Luxembourg Lfr 1500, Malaysia M 1500, Mexico Mx 1500, Norway Nkr 2000, Portugal P 1500, Spain P 1500, Sweden Skr 1500, Switzerland Sfr 1500, Tunisia T 200, USA \$20.



Hunt launched in London for rapist as car is found

By Richard Duce

A NATIONWIDE hunt for the convicted rapist Victor Farrant — wanted for the murder of his girlfriend and attempting to kill another woman — switched to London last night. Detectives found the missing white Ford Escort Cabriolet belonging to Glenda Hoskins, the accountant suffocated in the loft of her £115,000 waterside home in Portsmouth, Hampshire, dumped in a street in Plaistow. It emerged last night that Mrs Hoskins, 45, met Farrant while he was on home leave from an open prison, where he served the last months of a 12-year sentence for rape. Mrs Hoskins's car was last night was undergoing tests at the Aldermaston forensic science laboratory. Police, who are keeping a watch on all ports and airports, are also investi-

gating two positive sightings of Farrant in Brighton and Portsmouth on Wednesday, the day of the murder. Last night John Greenway, a Conservative member of the Commons home affairs select committee, condemned the decision to allow Farrant three separate periods of home leave before his release. "This calls into question what assessments were made of this man's suitability for home leave and his categorisation as someone who could be put in an open prison. These kinds of decision encourage distrust in the minds of the public about the people making the assessment for home leave." Farrant is described by police as "extremely dangerous" and is Britain's most wanted man. He was released from jail after serving just

Five years' jail for lord in cars fraud

By Bill Frost

LORD BROCKET, the polo-playing friend of the Prince of Wales, was today beginning a five-year prison term after admitting a £4.5 million insurance fraud involving four classic Italian sports cars. The disgraced peer swayed slightly in the dock at Luton Crown Court yesterday as the sentence was pronounced. Earlier, he had hung his head as Judge Daniel Rodwell told him that his conduct in compelling two employees to take part in the botched swindle was quite disgraceful. Lord Brocket, 43, was taken from court to Bedford prison. He will be kept there while officials decide where he should serve his sentence. Also in the dock with the Third Baron yesterday were Mark Caswell, 39, Brocket's chauffeur, and Stephen Gwyther, 40, a handyman on his

employer's estate. They were both sentenced to 21 months' imprisonment, suspended for two years. The judge said that they had been "suborned" by Brocket into abetting him. Desmond de Silva, QC defending, told the court that his client had acted out of panic and not greed when he hatched a plot to defraud General Accident and Lloyd's of London by pretending that the cars had been stolen from Brocket Hall, the family's stately home in Hertfordshire. The "madcap" scheme came to the peer as he suffered "searing marital unhappiness". Before sentence was passed, Mr de Silva said Brocket had dreamt up the crime to preserve the family home for his heirs. "Lord Brocket was author of his own misfortune."

Decline and fall, page 3

Lottery pushes golf clubs to drop sex handicap

By Gillian Bowditch
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE National Lottery is succeeding where generations of feminists have failed in getting Britain's golf clubs to give equal rights to women members. Two of Scotland's more traditional clubs have been told they will lose awards if they don't change their rules.

The male members of Crail Golfing Society will vote next week on break-

ing with a 200-year-old tradition and allowing women golfers full voting rights and a say in the running of the club at Balcomie Links on the shores of the Firth of Forth. If they do not change their constitution, the members risk losing a £442,000 award from The Scottish Sports Council's Lottery Sports Fund.

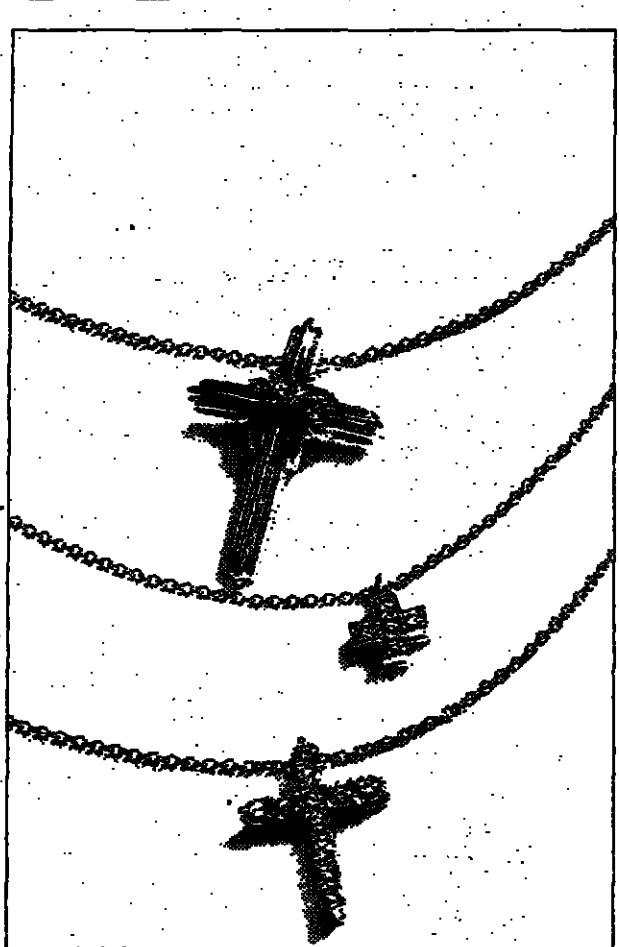
The £340-a-year Deeside Golf Club in Aberdeen is facing a similar ultimatum. To obtain a £185,000 lottery grant it will have to make

radical alterations to its constitution, including granting equal rights to women and juniors.

Ivor Davies, director of the Lottery Sports Fund, said a general rule dealing with accessibility and equal opportunities is attached to all grants. The news that it will have to rewrite the rule book has come as a surprise to members of the Deeside club. Alasdair Macdonald, club secretary, said: "We only discovered the conditions when we got the acceptance. There was no

mention of them in the application form. We have not had time to consider the implications and what we will do."

At the Crail Golfing Society, where membership costs £120-a-year, there are 200 women members but they have no voting rights. Jim Horsfield, the club's secretary, said that the issue of full voting rights for women had been under consideration for three years and had not been prompted by the lottery grant.



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TRAVEL: WEEKEND 16-21





Wheaton: top salary

Town pays its clerk £71,000

AN INQUIRY has begun into why the town clerk of a small river town is paid £71,000 a year — £3,000 more than a Cabinet minister.

Michael Wheaton, 51, who joined the council at Gooles, Humberside a decade ago as a part-time clerk on £9,469, is paid more than three times the average annual salary for his post.

The council's finance committee agreed to give him a 31 per cent rise two years ago when he was earning £54,000. The anomaly was discovered by the district auditor.

Brian Brown, chairman of the Andover NHS Trust in Hampshire, took a 10 per cent cut in earnings when the trust was faced with a £350,000 budget deficit, it was disclosed yesterday.

New university heads outstrip Oxbridge on pay

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

VICE-CHANCELLORS of the former polytechnics are beating their colleagues at traditional universities into the ranks of big earners, according to the first full comparison of top pay in higher education, published yesterday.

Among the heads of conventional universities, Derek Roberts, Provost of University College London, earned the highest salary, at £129,162. But three of the four best-paid vice-chancellors were from new universities: Leeds Metropolitan, Manchester Metropolitan and Glasgow Caledonian.

Heads of medical schools, who boost their salaries with National Health Service payments, earn most, according to the survey in *The Times Higher Education Supplement*. Cyril Chandler, of the United Medical and Dental School in London, headed the pay league with £139,000 in 1994-95.

More than 40 heads of higher-education institutions broke the £100,000 barrier last year, excluding pensions but taking account of other perks. Some recorded rises of 10 per cent or more at a time when lecturers received increases of less than 3 per cent.

Professor Ken Barker's salary at De Montfort University,

Leicester, rose from £107,000 to £118,000. His deputy, Professor Mike Brown, said the rise reflected a large increase in responsibility as the university had opened new sites in Bedford and Lincoln.

The salaries, which the Government ordered to be published in the universities' annual accounts, show that earnings are not related to the standing of the institution. The director of Bath College of Higher Education, for example, earned £103,000 last year compared with the £99,000 paid to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and £77,507 for his opposite number at Oxford.

Dr Peter North, Oxford's Vice-Chancellor, languished in the bottom half of the pay league, having received an increase of less than £1,000 in 1994-95. Across the city at Oxford Brookes University, Dr Clive Booth earned £13,500 more.

David Triesman, general secretary of the Association of University Teachers, said: "These are big jobs, and it is right that the salaries should be comparable with those for major jobs outside universities. But the same principle should apply to their staff, who will be hard to persuade if

they are expected to accept less."

The association will submit a claim for a substantial increase this week, as well as pressing for the establishment of a pay review body for higher education. Vice-chancellors' salaries are fixed by governors with reference to comparable rates in business and industry.

Keele paid its vice-chancellor the lowest salary among England's universities, at £70,000. Professor Brian Fender has since left to become chief executive of the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Sir William Stubbs, his counterpart at the Further Education Funding Council, is moving in the opposite direction to head the London Institute, a federation of art colleges which paid the fifth-highest salary in the sector last year.

None of the vice-chancellors, however, have the best-paid job in British higher education. That belongs to an unnamed academic at the London Business School, who earned between £150,000 and £160,000 last year. Her or (more likely) his salary was £27,000 higher than that paid to Professor George Bain, the school's principal.



Campaigners against the £4.30 toll on Skye Bridge marching to Dingwall Sheriff Court yesterday, where prosecutions began against 140 people accused of non-payment. They won the right to challenge the competency of the charges

NEWS IN BRIEF

Computer link to foil thugs

The Government yesterday unveiled a high-tech weapon to fight football hooliganism at this summer's European championship. "Photo-phones" will enable security staff to send pictures of suspects by computer link between police and the eight grounds where matches will be played.

Every point of entry for foreign supporters will be monitored and under immigration laws the Home Office will be able to turn back any troublemakers.

England fixtures, page 46

Accident pay-out

A man who has been in a persistent vegetative state since he fell from a dinghy during air-sea rescue training in 1987 was awarded £100,000 agreed High Court damages. At the time of the accident Lorien Bentley, 24, was on an exercise organised by Winchey House School, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex.

Father jailed

A man who put a cigarette into the mouth of his six-week-old son to impress his friends was jailed for 28 days by Maidstone Crown Court. He admitted ill-treatment but denied that the cigarette was lit.

Child killed

A small child was killed and its mother and another child were injured when an ambulance on a emergency call to a heart attack victim crashed into their car at Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

Duke told 'sorry'

The man who tried to sell details of a phone call to the Duke of Edinburgh is to send him an apology. Neville Hawkins, of Ingoldisthorpe, Norfolk, will not lose his job as a hospital maintenance worker.

Damages denied

Mervyn Bartlett of Botley, Oxfordshire, who has had a piece of needle lodged in his tongue for five years after an operation, has failed at Oxford County Court to win damages from the health authority.

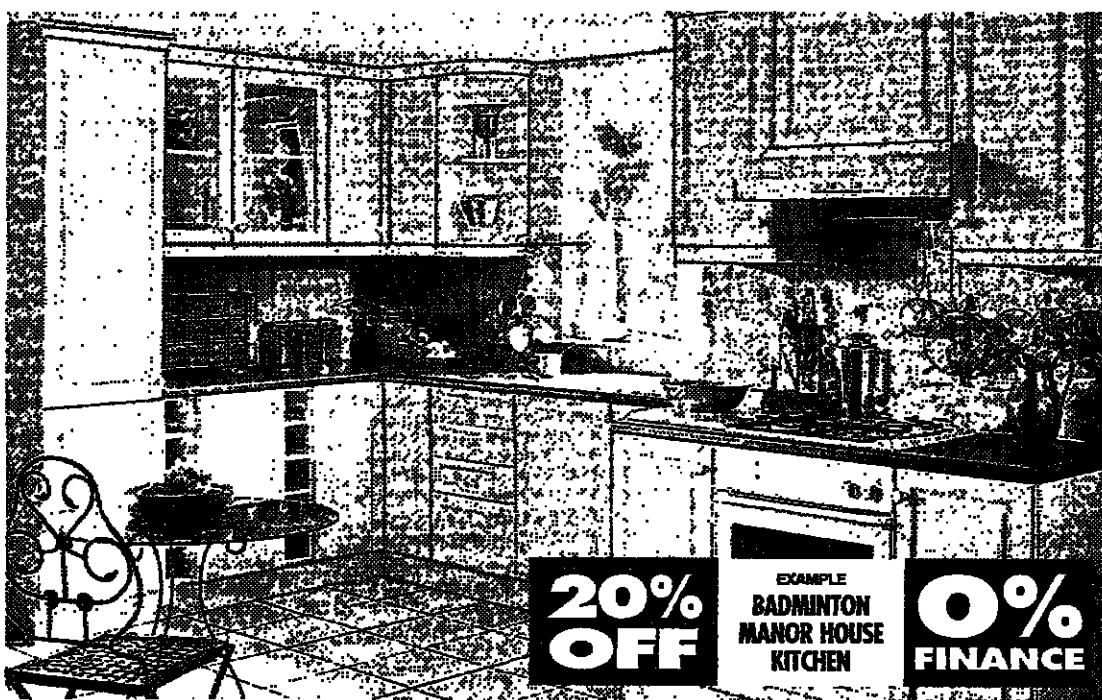
Burns man dies

Richard Horrobin, 20, of Newark, Nottinghamshire, died in hospital two days after setting himself on fire because he had split up with his girlfriend. He had suffered 70 per cent burns.

WEEKEND

The room rate for the Hotel Terminus Nord, Paris (Weekend, page 18), is from Fr 985. The rate for those travelling by Eurostar at weekends is Fr 700, with breakfast.

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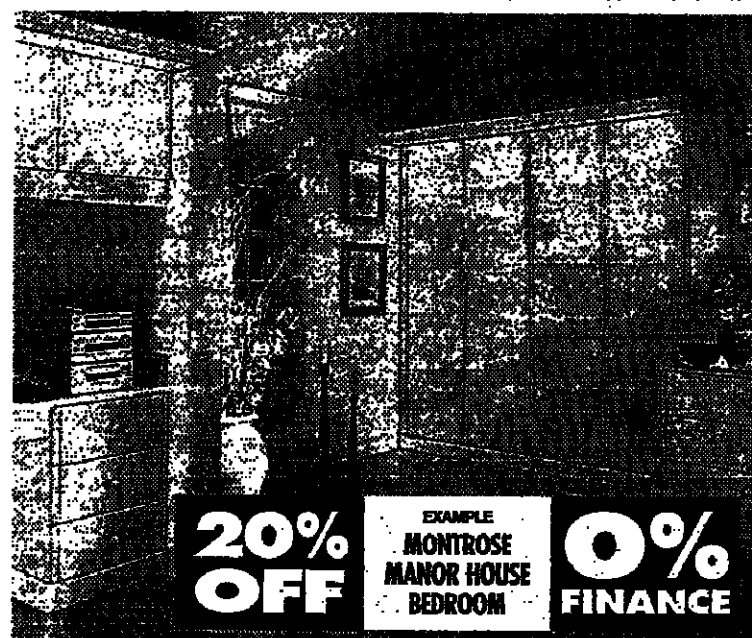
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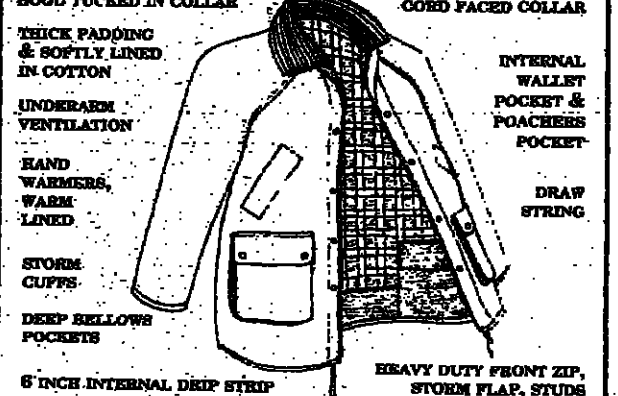
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Appeal court frees girl jailed for murder at 14

By Gillian Bowditch, Scotland Correspondent

THE youngest female murder convict in Scotland was freed yesterday after appeal judges ruled that she had been the victim of a miscarriage of justice.

Claire Codona was 14 when she was sentenced to be detained indefinitely last year for her part in a brutal murder in a park. Yesterday the judges ruled that there was insufficient evidence against her and that an admission made under intense police questioning had been obtained unfairly.

Miss Codona, of Glasgow, appeared bewildered after the decision was read out at the Court of Appeal in Edinburgh, but she burst into tears when she realised that she had been freed. After she had been led away to be reunited with her mother, Janette, Miss Codona's solicitor, Gerry McCune, said: "She will certainly be going back to school. She will just be getting on with the rest of her childhood now."

She was convicted of the murder of Michael Doran after a trial at the Glasgow High Court in October. Mr Doran, 35, was stabbed and stamped to death in a park that was frequented by homosexuals. Every bone in his face and skull was fractured.

John Cairns, 18, Miss Codona's boyfriend, who pleaded not guilty, and Richard Bell, 20, and Richard Ferguson, 16, who changed their pleas to guilty during the trial, were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Colin Boyd, QC, for the prosecution, said at the trial that the gang had horned in

"like predatory animals" on three men. Two escaped but the gang set upon Mr Doran, described by his family as a quiet, gentle man. Afterwards the three youths, their clothes still drenched in blood, boasted about what they had done at a party.

The appeal court was told that Miss Codona was questioned at length by two police women with only her father, who was an alcoholic, present. Her counsel, Gordon Jackson, QC, said Mr Codona, who had separated from his wife, had been unable to protect his daughter's interests. At the end of the questioning Miss Codona, clearly distressed, admitted kicking Mr Doran on the feet once. She later retracted her admission.

Yesterday Lord Hope, the Lord Justice-General, who was sitting with Lord Sutherland and Lord Murray, said that the police could not be criticised for cross-examining the girl, especially about her knowledge of the part played in the attack by others. But he said that questioning about her own involvement appeared to be an attempt to extract from her admissions that she was clearly not prepared to make voluntarily.

Miss Codona's home was decorated with balloons and a "Welcome Home" banner yesterday as her brothers, George, 19, and Mark, 21, awaited her return. George Codona said: "It's going to be great to have Claire back again. She should never have been locked away in the first place."

Chester quits radio

By Alexandra Frean

THE veteran entertainer Charlie Chester announced his retirement from radio yesterday, three months after suffering a stroke.

The BBC confirmed that Chester, 82, will not return to *Sunday Soapbox*, the Radio 2 show he has presented since 1969. He will be replaced "for the time being" by Frank Topping.

Jim Moir, controller of Radio 2, said: "After 50 years in the front line of entertainment, the time has come for Charlie to stand easy for a while and recuperate." *Stand Easy* was the name of his first radio show.

The comic, who started his career in music hall, is said to



Chester: stroke victim

be making progress in the specialist stroke unit at Nunnery Fields Hospital, Canterbury, Kent, where he has been since November. He faces a prolonged recovery.



Papa and Nicole: Renault's commercial was singled out as particularly offensive

Women insulted by 'patronising' TV car adverts

By Alexandra Frean, Media Correspondent

ADVERTISING campaigns for cars are stuck in a 1950s time warp that patronises women and ignores their growing purchasing power, according to a survey published yesterday.

Renault's commercial for its Clio small car, featuring Papa and Nicole, was singled out for criticism by researchers, who said that many women found it insulting that Nicole is portrayed as a spoilt child who drives a car bought by her indulgent father.

Some women objected to an advertisement showing a woman with her hair blowing through the sun roof of a Ford Fiesta, which was described as "your 16-valve hair-drier". They also disliked commercials that showed macho images of cars speeding or going over cliffs because they contained little practical information about safety features or prices.

Julia Dunn, media research director with the magazine company Condé Nast which conducted the survey, said more than half the

women polled felt they were patronised by the car industry. The idea that women wanted a powder-blue coupe with a vanity mirror persisted with some manufacturers, whereas most women said that safety, service contracts and power were their criteria in choosing a car.

The survey of more than 700 women by Condé Nast, showed that 98 per cent of respondents possess their own car. Some 84 per cent of women car owners bought their vehicle with their own money and 60 per cent made the choice completely on their own. Ten per cent of women drivers have a company car and in 1995 women bought 45 per cent of all new cars sold for private use.

Nicholas Coleridge, managing director of Condé Nast, publishers of the up-market titles *Vogue*, *Tatler* and *Vanity Fair*, said: "Advertisers are still stuck in the mid 1950s when it comes to selling cars."

One for the road, Car 96

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Farewell to the Lords?

"Obby" the 12th Duke of St Albans, hereditary grand falconer of England, intended to take a live falcon to the 1953 coronation. When



informed that it would have to be a stuffed bird instead, he refused to attend at all.

His successor never sat in the House of Lords, not possessing a dual strawberry-leaved coronet — explaining that he didn't like dressing up...

Andrew Roberts on the House of Lords — *News Review*, The Sunday Times tomorrow

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Calm Scott keeps his head above the flood

'The wettest, most liberal judge they could find?'
Sir Richard merely smiles

Sir Richard Scott likens his situation this week to the rainy summers of his boyhood in Natal, when the waters of the River Moot were in flood. You could jump in and just let the current carry you along. "I'm now in the stream, I don't even need to swim," he says. After three years of circumspect silence, he is now swept along by events.

"Angry Scott lashes back at critics," headline soundbites pre-hyping next Thursday's publication of his report are vividly at odds with Scott's equable demeanour. "By next week they will have exhausted their epithets. Perhaps there will be a stunned silence."

To see him you climb a spiral staircase, past the long room where the Scott inquiry took place, to an upper floor of the Department of Trade and Industry, a converted hotel between Buckingham Palace and Victoria Station.

His mind is quick, his intellect keen, his tone clipped, his manner mild and affable. His favourite reading is Wodehouse. He is of medium height, spry for 61, and weighed in at 13st 7lbs at the last Bar point-to-point. Let Sir Bernard Ingham huff about "dredging up the wettest, most liberal judge they could find": Sir Richard merely smiles his blue-eyed smile. As he said of such critics as Lord Howe of Aberavon and Douglas Hurd, "they were not on my Christmas card list anyway".

As a judge, he says, he is bound to be part of the Establishment. But his "outsider" status, and his individualistic pursuits, make him more interesting than that. Characteristically, he went (unnoticed) to see the Tricycle Theatre's dramatisation of the Scott inquiry, and enjoyed

seeing himself impersonated on stage.

He was born in India and raised in South Africa. At Cambridge he took a First, was a rugby Blue (wing forward) and bridge player, but not a Union debater. From there he went to the University of Chicago as a Bigelow Fellow and spent the year court-riding his New York-born Panamanian wife, who was reading Christian culture. They married in Panama that

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



summer. He spent the last of his \$5,000 stipend on their honeymoon trip in two single cabins back to Europe via the Caribbean on a German banana-boat captained by a former U-boat commander.

"My wife wishes me to correct the fallacy that she was a flamenco dancer, as if I picked her up in some Cuban bar," he says. "But there is a substratum of fact. My mother-in-law was a professional Spanish dancer who opened a dancing school which became the Panamanian national dance institute, so my wife was always involved in dancing."

All their children speak Spanish — a daughter, who edits Spanish children's

books, lives in Madrid — but Scott has no facility for languages; he failed his Afrikaans exam at school. Two of his children have converted to Islam (one daughter who did a PhD in Islamic theology at Oxford, and a son who makes furniture in Manchester) and his eldest son, a mathematician, works in computer software programming in the United States.

The attempts to define Scott as eccentric, barmy etc are very wide of the mark. The bicycle on which he has been photographed so often is merely the most "efficient, independent" way to get round London. He is not a class traitor for daring to clean out the Augean stables, but impatient of pomp or pretence; so he was neither awed by Thatcher nor cowed by Howe.

To Lord Howe's complaints that Scott failed to observe the six Salmon principles, he responds that there should be only one principle: "to devise procedures that are (a) fair and (b) efficient. I slightly bridle at the idea that there should be rules. I don't think there is any argument to support the 'unfairness' charge." He rejects the view that his inquisition was aggressive; aggression is not his style.

He decided not to allow television cameras into the inquiry — because of their intrusiveness (a correct decision, he adds in a footnote, after the O.J. Simpson trial) and the possibility of unbalanced editing.

But he says: "I do not underestimate the pressure felt by public figures of having to appear in public to explain their actions. If there was any element of unfairness in the procedure I used, it would have been found there. I don't discount the considerable



Sir Richard Scott: he is unmoved by attacks from Lord Howe and Douglas Hurd — "they were not on my Christmas card list anyway"

pressure of appearing in open hearings in front of sceptical journalists to defend what one has done as a minister or civil servant. While recognising that pressure, I think the decision to have the hearings in public whenever practicable was correct, where public figures are being questioned about the manner in which they discharge their duties, and where allegations of misdemeanour have been made, the public is entitled to see them examined."

He is a libertarian: his 1987 Sycatcher judgment ("The reasons put forward explaining the Government's inaction

are shallow and unconvincing... The facts surrounding the decision not to attempt to restrain publication are, as they emerged in the evidence given before me, very curious") was an indication of his attitude to unnecessary secrecy.

Of the leaks of his report, he says that Mark Higgs, late of the Iraqi desk at the Foreign Office, has identified himself as the source of one leak; "and I think I know who was responsible for the second leak last summer".

After years in the Chancery division — fascinating, but

rarely dramatic — he has enjoyed his three years "working with a small, highly motivated and efficient team" among whom Presley Baxendale, QC, quickly established himself as a star.

Sir Richard lists no gentlemen's clubs in *Who's Who*. He has no need of clubs; he prefers to go home. He ponders: should he feel slighted not to have been put up for the Garrick? "Perhaps I'm like King John — and sometimes no one spoke to him for days and days and days." He does list Vanderbilt Racquet Club — the tennis club where William Waldegrave plays. But

they have never bumped into each other on that sort of court.

Asked if he was a wiser man after his inquiry, he adapted F.E. Smith's reply: "I'm a better informed man." And will his five-volume, 1,800-page report be as riveting as Denning? "Nobody writes like Denning or speaks like Denning," he replies. "It would be cruel to compare us."

It was not his idea to give ministers their week-long preview of his report; he was "persuaded" to allow it. But Scott will hold his own press conference that afternoon (ready to respond to any

criticisms: "Criticisms of a judge's judgments are a fact of life") and will promptly depart for Ireland to hunt for a week. Then he resumes his role as Vice-Chancellor of the Supreme Court, and takes on his new one as Head of Civil Justice.

John Major correctly divined that Scott was neither one of us, nor one of them: the ideal choice. After seeing him I applied a test. Would I entrust a crucial question regarding my own life to Scott's judgment and probity? Yes. I would. But being imperfect, I would feel, as Lord Howe put it, outbursts of anxiety.

Point-scoring raises Tory morale, but the fight is far from over

TORY MPs are currently chirpy and Labour members deflated. It could all turn round again after next Thursday and the publication of the Scott report. But a distinct change in the morale of the Tories has occurred over the past three weeks, thanks to a combination of the opinion polls and some strong performances by John Major at Prime Minister's Questions.

Both can, and have been, exaggerated. It is premature to talk of a turning point which alters the odds of the next election. But, as the MORI poll for *The Times* showed two weeks ago, Tory support had already begun to pick

up even before the Harriet Harman row blew up, possibly reflecting an improvement in economic confidence.

This trend has been confirmed by this week's two polls from ICM and Gallup, even though the latter probably exaggerated the underlying change since comparison was with an unusually low rating for the Tories at the beginning of January. Labour's previous big lead has narrowed a little, but is still huge by past standards.

Tory spirits have also been boosted by events in Parliament. This is currently operating on two different levels. The most familiar is the campaigning: highly parti-

san exchanges which dominate Prime Minister's Questions. The other is routine Commons business, scrutinising the executive and legislating, which carries on as before, largely out of the limelight.

A few dozen MPs have spent many hours this week debating the details of the Bills implementing the Budget tax cuts, tightening asylum and immigration rules and on housing. There has always been a tension between these two aspects of politics, but it has got much worse since the New Year as the Tories have moved to a pre-election footing. Prime Minister's Questions has been turned by the

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Tories into an extended series of attacks on Labour.

On Thursday, only one of five questions asked by a Tory MP was even remotely about the responsibilities of the Prime Minister himself, and the exception, about a National Lottery grant to a Milton Keynes theatre, was turned by Mr Major into a Labour bash.

This is not unusual. Labour has calculated that three-quarters of Tory questions to Mr Major are about Labour, and about two-

fifths of other questions to ministers from Tory backbenchers focus on Labour rather than the Government's conduct.

It is all point-scoring politics at its worst. A Tory MP gets up and says isn't it good that the Government does not favour giving in to the unions, breaking up the United Kingdom or being hypocritical, and Mr Major agrees, giving a quote from a Labour MP to embarrass the Opposition.

However dreadful it is to endure, there is no reason why Tory MPs should not raise questions about alleged contrasts between Mr Blair's "new" Labour aspirations and continuing "old" Lab-

our practices. But, so long before an election, this has distorted Prime Minister's Questions. As Mr Blair claims, it has almost inverted the roles of government and opposition.

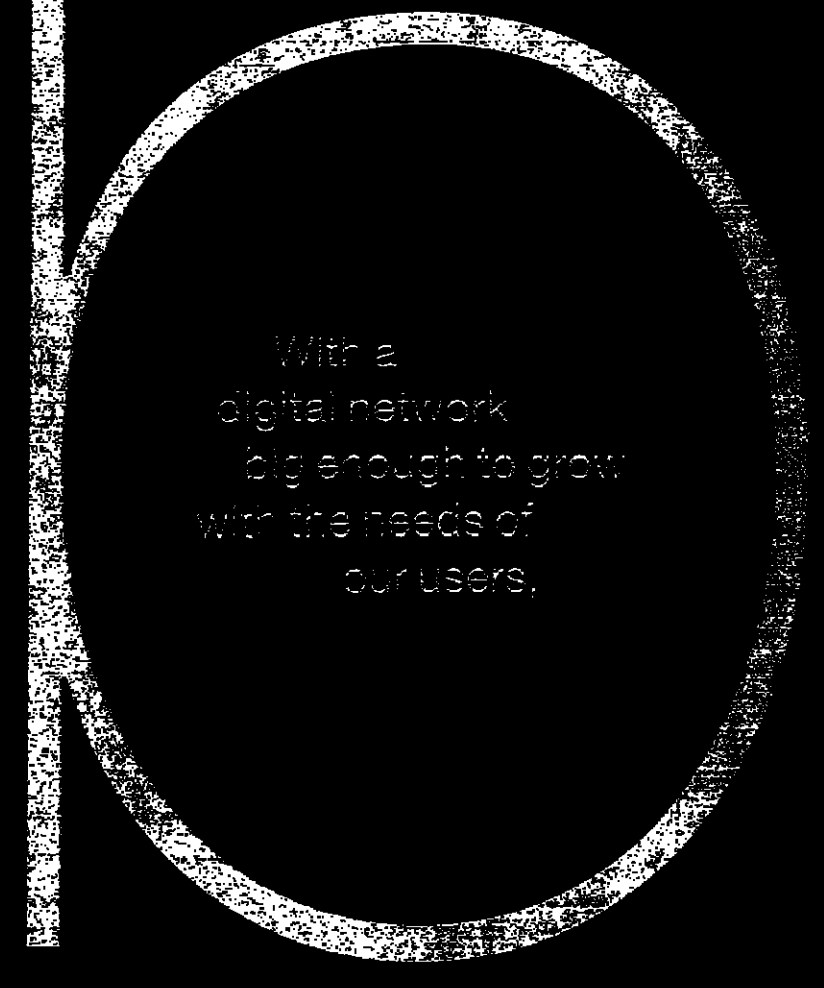
The Harman row allowed the Tories to go on the offensive. Armed with some sharp one-liners, Mr Major has turned in several strong performances, to the gleeful cheers of his own side, even though the raucous jousting has not always played so well on television news bulletins. These successes have done wonders for his morale and that of Tory backbenchers.

This matters since an improve-


ment in the spirits of MPs can extend in a ripple out to Conservative supporters in the country. And, under the party chairman Brian Mawhinney and his new research and communications team, Conservative Central Office has become much sharper in responding to Labour and going on the attack.

At present these are merely skirmishes, not decisive engagements. The Tories still have a long, long way to recover and they have no shortage of headaches, current and imminent, on railways and Scott.

PETER RIDDELL



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'Someone misbehaved. That happens'

Major shrugs off botched start to railway sell-off

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

JOHN MAJOR struggled to limit the political damage caused by the disastrous launch of rail privatisation as the search began yesterday for a fresh buyer for the Southend "misery line" franchise.

The Prime Minister insisted that the timetable for the sale of British Rail services would be unaffected by allegations of ticket fraud at the London Tilbury & Southend (LTS) commuter franchise.

"Someone misbehaved. That happens. It happens in the public sector," Mr Major said on a school visit in his Huntingdon constituency. It has not thrown the timetable into chaos. It is tiresome that we will have to re-franchise the LTS line, but that's all."

Labour was quick to seize on the word "misbehaved" which it saw as a damaging gaffe by Mr Major. "This isn't misbehaviour. These are serious allegations of fraud involving thousands of pounds," John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, said. Brian Wilson, the party's transport spokesman, also accused Mr Major of making light of serious allegations.

LTS had been chosen as one

of the first three franchises to be sold because it was regarded as one of the simplest to privatise. However, rail experts said the problems at LTS were unlikely to hold up privatisation significantly as the Government was committed to selling the vast bulk of the 25 passenger franchises, 23 of which are still owned by BR, before May next year.

The management buyout for the LTS franchise was abandoned on Thursday after the two senior managers, Chris Kinchin-Smith, the managing director, and Roger Turner, the finance director, were removed from their jobs by British Rail.

An investigation into ticket sale irregularities found no evidence that they were involved, but John Welsby, the British Rail chairman, decided that senior management changes were necessary at the franchise. They will be given new jobs at BR's headquarters in London.

The sale of the LTS franchise will now start again virtually from scratch with shortlisted bidders beaten by the management buyout team invited to reapply by Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, a process that is

likely to take several months. The shortlisted companies are Prism, a consortium of bus companies, GB Railways, a management buy-in team, and Stagecoach, the bus company that has already won the South West Trains franchise.

In the Commons Labour MPs demanded an emergency statement from Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary. Donald Anderson, Labour MP for Swansea East, said: "Given the seriousness of the situation and the shambolic nature of the Government's programme, surely Sir George should be here to make a statement to the House."

David Chidgey, the Liberal Democrat's transport spokesman, said: "This proves conclusively that the government system of franchising is a total fiasco."

Roger Ford, editor of *Rail Privatisation News*, said: "The Government is absolutely set on privatisation and is determined to close down BR by the next election. There is some egg on faces and it will raise doubts about Roger Salmon's judgment, but in terms of the Government it is just a shell bouncing off the armour plating."



Braving the rain were, left to right, the Rev Ragglan Haywill, the Rev Peter Owen-Jones, the Rev John Miller and the Right Rev John Bickersteth

Clergymen condemn 'scandalous' bypass

By ADRIAN LEE

A GROUP of clergymen joined the protest against the Newbury bypass yesterday, holding a service on the construction site. One described the £101 million project as part of the "war against creation" and another accused the Government of being two-faced.

Their stance was condemned by Church leaders in the Oxford diocese, through which the bypass will run, as an act of worship that appeared to encourage people to break the law.

The Rev Peter Owen-Jones, of St Mary's Church, Wistow, Cambridgeshire, the Right Rev John Bickersteth,

the former Bishop of Bath and Wells; the Rev John Miller, of the United Reform Church, Reading; and the Rev Ragglan Haywill, of Sussex University, braved driving rain and freezing cold to conduct the brief service as work continued around them.

Mr Owen-Jones, who later shook hands with security guards, said in his reading: "Looking around us now it does not take a lot of imagination to realise that we are at the centre of a battlefield. We have reached the point of being in a state of war against creation. This simple service is to ask God's forgiveness and to encourage us to work for peace and harmony in the

land we have inherited." A woman protester sobbed loudly as the former bishop read from Psalm 104. He added: "Yes, Lord, we are being thoroughly political, because it is politicians who decide things and you know that, because you were crucified on a trumped-up political charge."

"Please help our Government to see how feeble and two-faced they are being, like Pontius Pilate was 2,000 years ago. These things are a scandal and unworthy of the civilised country we purport to be."

A spokesman for the Oxford diocese said that local clergy did not share their views. "The service has not been authorised by the diocese, nor has it the support of local Church leaders. They will not support an act of worship which appears to encourage the contravention of the law."

About 20 protesters attended the service. Greater numbers are expected in Newbury on Sunday for a mass walk and rally in protest at the bypass. □ A £1 million road scheme, held up for 10 years by a colony of rare ants, is to go ahead after a compromise was reached with conservationists. It had been feared work on the Newtown-Machynlleth road in Powys, near Corris-coch, would destroy the colony of *Formica rufa* ants.

A third of Jews shun synagogue

By RUTH GLEDHILL

ONE in three Jews in Britain no longer belongs to a synagogue and nearly half of Anglo-Jewish men under 40 have a non-Jewish partner.

A survey, due to be published next week by the Institute of Jewish Affairs and previewed in yesterday's *Jewish Chronicle*, shows that Jewish men inter-marry more than women.

It is certain to be greeted with alarm by Orthodox Jews, who make up about 40 per cent of Britain's 300,000-strong Jewish community, and the other mainstream bodies which have been struggling to combat a decline in the community caused by intermarriage and assimilation.

The survey, based on 2,000 postal questionnaires, indicates that Britain is following the American trend, where more than half of all Jews now marry non-Jews.

First wedding for Blackpool Tower

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A COUPLE were married at Blackpool Tower yesterday, the latest example of how the recent Marriages Act is changing the face of British weddings.

With strong winds sweeping across the snow-covered promenade, Gaynor Sexton tied the knot with Kevin Sands, a marketing executive she met in London five years ago, in the Blackpool Tower ballroom.

They were the first to marry at the 102-year-old tower. Mr Sands, 41, said: "I always wanted to get married somewhere different. When we heard the tower had been granted its licence for weddings, I thought, 'That's the place for us.' The tower has been a meeting place for lovers. It is a magical place."

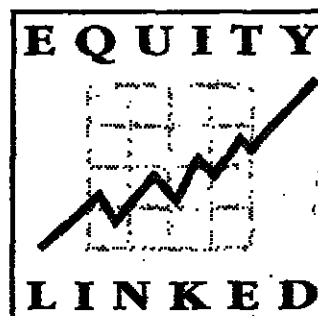
A tower spokesman said: "Many people have got engaged after meeting in the tower. It is a unique piece of seaside architecture and is

now registered for weddings." In 1985 the escapist Karl Bartoni and his bride Wendy Stokes were blessed by a vicar as they hung from a rope from the tower top.

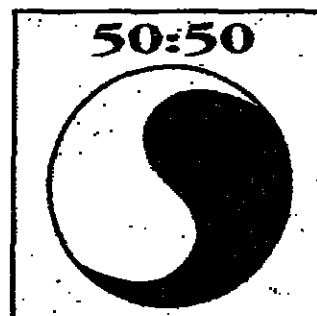
Thanks to the 1994 Marriages Act, which allows local authorities to consider a range of premises for marriage ceremonies, couples are beginning to adopt the American trend for unusual venues. According to Ivan Allen, organiser of the first National Wedding Show, which began this week at Olympia, west London, conventional weddings are now considered "boring".

Steve Jenkins, spokesman for the Church of England, said he doubted there would be a decline in church weddings. "Bookings are up in my church," he said. "In 1992, the last year on record, half of all marriages in England took place with a religious ceremony. I doubt that will change significantly."

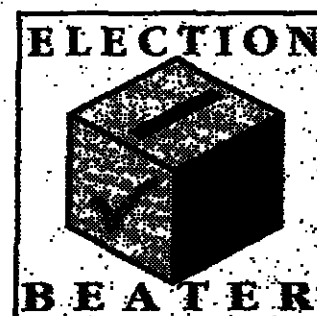
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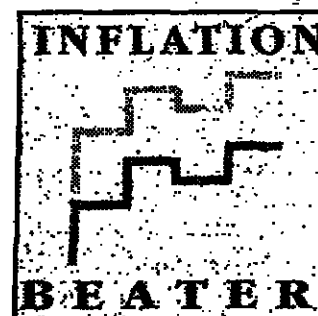
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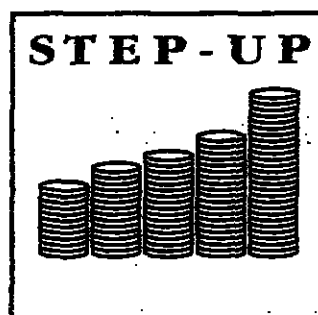
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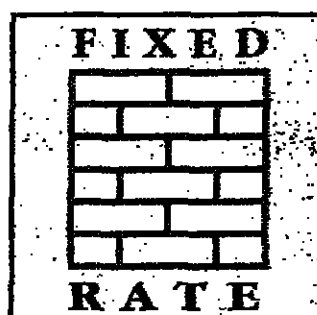
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هنا نحن النحل

Milder weather than Russia attracts migrants; shooting ban saves natives

Big freeze is a ray of sunshine for thousands of birds

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

THE abnormal weather is proving a lifesaver to birds: one species is seeking refuge in this country from even colder weather in its normal migration grounds, and others have been given a stay of execution from wildfowling guns because the cold is threatening their survival. Arctic weather conditions in northern Scandinavia and Siberia that make even snow-struck Britain seem benign have led to the biggest winter invasion of bright-hued waxwings for 30 years, bird watchers said yesterday.

Chris Mead, of the British Trust for Ornithology, said: "We always see a few waxwings each year, and some hundreds every three or four years, but this winter we reckon there are at least 10,000 in flocks of up to 100. The last time so many came here was in 1965-66."

The birds began arriving around Christmas, landing

first in Scotland and then moving to the north and east of England. They have also been sighted in Wales, Ireland, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Gloucestershire.

Waxwings (*Bombus garrulus*) breed in the open glades of the pine forests of northern continental Europe and Russia and move south and west in the winter in search of food. They like berries, especially those of rowan trees and hawthorn bushes. It is thought the

waxwings could have been driven to forage further afield because of extra competition for these delicacies from other birds.

"They are about the size of a starling with a crest, a pinkish breast and a yellow band across the end of the tail", Mr Mead said. The wing feathers are tipped with red and yellow.

"In their homeland they have little to fear from human beings and are usually extremely tame and trusting."

The harsh weather means wild duck and geese will also have less cause to fear humans, at least temporarily. Shooting has been banned in England and Wales because of the threat to the birds' survival from the abnormally cold weather. The ban takes effect at 9am today for 14 days. Although the ban will be reviewed after a week, when it could be lifted if the weather improves, it will effectively



The waxwing, which is seeking refuge here in numbers unseen for 30 years

wipe out the rest of the wildfowling season. It covers the shooting of such birds as Canada and brent geese, wild-geese, pintail, teal, mallard and shoveller.

Robin Peel, of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, said: "Inland shooting ended on January 31, but thousands of our members will lose the last week and a bit of shooting in coastal regions. There is some dismay that the Environment Department has

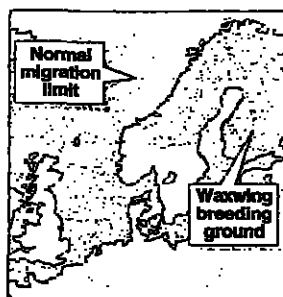
chosen to impose a national ban, despite regional differences in the severity of the weather."

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, a ban takes effect within two days after 13 days of frost have been recorded by more than half of 23 meteorological stations.

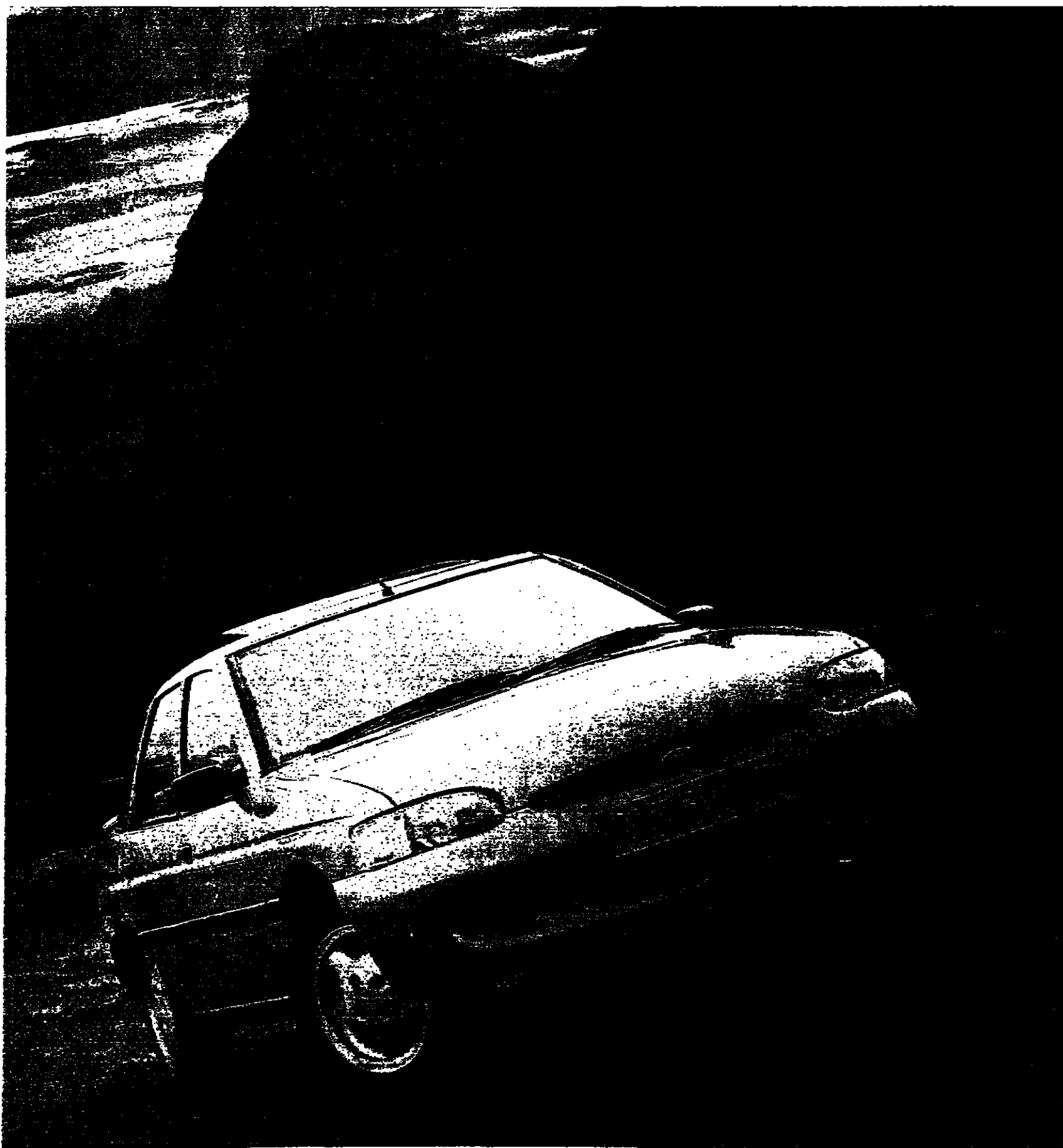
David Stroud, senior ornithologist at the joint nature conservation committee, which advises the Government, said: "The case for

regional bans has always been rejected because they would encourage disproportionate shooting pressure on birds that have taken refuge in warmer areas. The birds have low reserves of body fat anyway at this time of year and hence little to draw on if frozen lakes and gravel pits prevent them from feeding."

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Credo

Don't worry about hell, just try to be good

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain

Christians who are concerned that moral anarchy might break out now that the Church of England says hell no longer exists as a physical place of everlasting torment, can take comfort from the Jewish experience of never having that spectre in the first place.

There is a belief in a world to come, which the soul will inhabit after the death of the body, but its exact nature lies undefined. The Bible itself provides no clear picture. The references to the horrors of Gehenna (Gehenna in the New Testament) were not warnings of a netherworld, but a description of an actual site south of Jerusalem that was used by pagan cults for child sacrifice and which later became the city rubbish dump with perpetual fires trying to clear the stinking refuse.

The spirit of Samuel was called up by the Witch of Endor from Sheol, which appears to have been considered the resting place of all souls, both good and bad alike. It is not until the very end of the Hebrew Bible, (Daniel xii, 2) that reference is made to a distinction between those enjoying everlasting life and those experiencing everlasting abhorrence.

For the rabbis of the Talmud, which codified the beliefs and practices of Judaism in the fifth century, it was inconceivable that a God of love could condemn miscreants to perpetual darkness. To counterbalance Daniel, they quoted David: "I was brought low and He saved me" (Psalm 116, 6), and declared that God would never turn his back on anyone forever. If the wicked did suffer some punishment after death, it was for a maximum of 12 months.

There was another reason for this decision. The rabbis wished to place the theological emphasis firmly on this world and concentrate on "immediate behaviour rather than everlasting salvation."

Hell was relegated to an occasional preaching device. Hence the story of the

rabbi who wished to see hell and was taken to room full of people wailing. They were sitting around a pot of soup, but were starving because their spoons were so long that they could not eat.

The rabbi was then shown heaven. It was exactly the same scene, people with long spoons around a pot of soup. Here, however, everyone was well-fed and happy — because they used the spoons to feed each other.

This earth-bound concept of the homiletical hell was developed by later sermons into the notion that individuals create their own bliss or bitterness through their deeds and relationships.

This also suggests that those in the depths of despair can change their condition through determined effort and holds out the hope that earthy heaven is around the corner for those who seek it.

The absence of a real and permanent hell did not mean that the rabbis lacked sanctions. A wrong-doer could be threatened with the *herem* — "social excommunication" — in which he was ostracised by the Jewish community and banned from the synagogue.

In a pre-modern society in which individuals were identified by the group to which they belonged, such isolation could have a devastating effect and proved an effective tool for centuries.

The institution of the *herem* has disappeared today, and rabbis now rely on preaching another variation of a personalised heaven and hell that which comes with age when reviewing the course of one's life and the feeling of completeness or hollowness one has.

There is no greater hell than ending life knowing one has failed it, and no greater heaven than leaving behind a legacy of love, warm memories and positive achievement.

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain is minister of Maidenhead Synagogue.

At Your Service
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Mandela pressed to deliver on promises

FROM R.W. JOHNSON IN JOHANNESBURG

WITH President Mandela's Government approaching its second anniversary in office, the euphoria of transition has given way to a feeling that it is time for him to deliver on election promises.

Mr Mandela yesterday inaugurated the new session of parliament, in which ministers are planning to present more than 230 Bills covering every aspect of the nation's life. It is far from clear, however, that they will dispel the misgivings.

Black voters want more jobs, more houses, better schools and better healthcare. Results on all these fronts are poor. The economy is growing at 3.5 per cent, but the number of jobs is static at best, thanks to lay-offs on the gold mines and in the civil services of the former homelands.

A recent poll shows that while Mr Mandela has a 77 per cent approval rating, only 58 per cent are satisfied with the Government, 53 per cent with parliament, and 41 per cent with the way democracy is working.

The Government's housing programme has been a disaster. H.F. Verwoerd remains the only South African leader to build a million houses for blacks, while the

African National Congress-led Government looks likely to build less than 25,000 in its first two years.

The Health Ministry has also achieved little, and has seen an increased emigration rate among skilled white doctors, producing a large shortfall to be met by importing Cuban doctors.

The ministry has just given away a fifth of its Aids publicity budget to finance a play by one of the ANC's favourite playwrights. Meanwhile, in rural KwaZulu more than 22 per cent of the population is now HIV positive, and hospitals are being overwhelmed. The rest of the country is moving towards similar infection levels.

It is, however, education that looks like providing the key political battleground of the session. The Government has just announced that it will take over without compensation all the previously white state schools into which white parents have put a good deal of private money. There is likely to be a further exodus towards private schools.

White parents' fears are hardly assuaged by the fact many ANC leaders have placed their children in such schools. Inland reform too, the ANC's



President Mandela greets white schoolchildren yesterday outside parliament in Cape Town, where the critical new session was inaugurated

radicalism is beginning to bite. Legislation to redistribute white-owned land by forcing farmers to sell plots to labour tenants has been pushed through parliament against strong farming opposition.

These struggles are taking place in the context of the debate over the new constitution, which is to be finalised in this session. The ANC needs a two-thirds majority in the assembly, but could hold a referendum which might pass the plans by a simple majority. Once the constitution is passed, the ANC will no longer need its coalition partners, Inkatha and the National Party, as much as now.

Only 7 per cent of ANC MPs want to continue with the Government of National Unity once that stage is reached, and are looking forward eagerly to a single party government.

Polls show, however, that a majority of voters prefer the current form of government, for it is strongly identified with the mood of reconciliation and goodwill, which is Mr Mandela's overwhelming achievement to date.

Whether this mood will survive the battles ahead is the main question looming over the new session.

Sporting model set for nation

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN CAPE TOWN

SOUTH Africans were asked by President Mandela yesterday to unite behind a "new patriotism" and join hands in creating his vision of a prosperous "winning nation".

Opening of the third democratic parliamentary session, which will see through the new constitution. Mr Mandela called on his countrymen to follow the lead of their victorious national

sports teams in uniting the nation. He said to loud applause: "All of us must take the national project of accelerated and fundamental transformation very seriously indeed. The achievement of equity, non-racialism and non-sexism constitutes the very essence of the new society."

Mr Mandela reflected on the achievements over 22 months since democratic elections — including water and electrification projects, free

health care and education — but said there was a long road ahead. The former ruling National Party praised the speech as well balanced, but the right-wing Freedom Front said that his call for new patriotism was ill-timed.

Last night the former ruling National Party praised the speech as well balanced, but the right-wing Freedom Front said his call for new patriotism was ill-timed.

Lions' tour, page 48

WORLD SUMMARY

American rail crash kills three

Secaucus, New Jersey: A train crowded with morning commuters went past a stop signal and crashed into another train going in the opposite direction yesterday, killing at least three people and injuring more than 100 others.

Rescue efforts were complicated by the difficult location. Although less than five miles from New York City, it is in a marshland and the only access is by dirt road. (AP)

Spain's spies can listen in on calls

Madrid: A judge has ruled that the Spanish secret service, Cesid, has the right to listen to mobile telephone conversations (Edward Owen writes). Last year two ministers and the head of Cesid resigned in a scandal over calls taped by agents, including some involving King Juan Carlos.

Swans perish in icy Baltic

Tallinn: Thousands of Estonia swans are in danger of dying as one of the harshest winters has frozen the shallow waters of the Baltic sea where they feed. Hundreds have starved to death. The remaining 5,000 could also die if, as forecasts predict, the waters are locked in ice for weeks. (AP)

Father of the spacesuit dies

New York: Russell Colley, dubbed the father of the spacesuit, has died at 97 in Ohio. He had wanted to design clothing but was sent by his teacher to engineering classes because he was a boy. His first spacesuits were worn by astronauts in the Mercury flights of the 1960s. (AFP)

Hare brained

Canberra: A scientist unveiled the ultimate "green" lawnmower, a 20ft-long cylindrical cage made of bicycle wheels and wire netting powered by two trained rabbits, who roll it along as they nibble grass, fertilising as they go. (Reuters)

Thai monk begs parents' forgiveness

FROM JONATHAN MILLER IN BANGKOK

THE Thai monk sentenced to death for the murder of the British backpacker, Johanne Mashedier, appealed again yesterday to her parents to forgive him.

From his prison cell, Yodchart Suaphoo, 23, a drug addict, said: "I beg you to forgive me for my terrible crime."

The former monk was manacled hand and foot in his cell, which he shares with five other inmates on death row in Bangkok's Bangkokwan Prison.

During an unprecedented, guided tour of the jail by the Interior Ministry, Yodchart acknowledged that murdering

Mashedier had brought shame on Thailand and Buddhism. "I deeply regret what I did. I deserve to die for my sins."

It's more than likely that he will. Two weeks ago, Thailand resumed executing prisoners after a nine-year hiatus. Unlike other inmates in his cell block, Yodchart will probably not benefit from a royal amnesty to coincide with the golden jubilee of King Adulyadej's reign on June 9.

"This hate him!" said Wiwit Jaturapattana, the Deputy Director-General of the Corrections Department. "He hurt our country. We are ashamed." Few Thais think Yodchart, who killed Mashedier for £15 in her money-belt and threw her body into a cave, should be shown mercy.

The amnesty is expected to benefit as many as 26,000 inmates, a third of the prison population. Those who will also benefit are the 3,769 foreign inmates, among whom are 72 Britons.

Sandra Gregory, of Yorkshire, who pleaded guilty to heroin trafficking three years ago, is due to be sentenced at the end of the month and may qualify for a reduced sentence. Robert Locke, arrested with her, but pleaded not guilty, may not be so lucky.

One Briton on death row is Allan Davies, 54, from Poole, Dorset. Yesterday, from his dimly lit cell he was still protesting his innocence against his sentence for heroin trafficking.

Peking gives warning to Taipei on Olympics

Hong Kong: China has threatened a strong response if Taiwan officials attend the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta (Jonathan Mirsky writes).

Wu Shaozhu, the Sports Minister who also heads the Chinese Olympic Committee, said yesterday that while China does not object to athletes from Taiwan competing in the Atlanta games, "we are against senior Taiwan officials trying to use the games for political purposes." If the

American Government allows top Taiwan officials to go to the Atlanta games, China will make a strong response.

Phil Coles, of the International Olympic Committee, said: "I'm against this sort of action." All heads of states competing in the games attend the gathering, he added.

Peking's warning comes amid Chinese military pressure on Taiwan, where the first presidential elections will be held next month.

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Buchanan's conservatism has struck a chord in rural backwater made famous by Hollywood

Right builds bridges in Madison County

FROM TOM RHODES IN MADISON COUNTY, IOWA

THE yellow cornfields are bare and the rust-coloured Roseman Bridge is coated with snow, but even in winter Madison County holds a certain lustre for the incurably romantic.

They come in their droves, dreamers obsessed by the simple tale of Francesca Johnson and Robert Kincaid, a brief encounter which has brought fame and fortune to this otherwise neglected enclave.

Since Robert James Waller first published the *Bridges of Madison County* in 1992 and the release of its Hollywood offshoot last year starring Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep, the timber-covered constructions and the hamlet of Winterset have become meccas to the cult of passion.

Today three love letters are pinned to the trelliswork of the Roseman Bridge, suggestive notes in English, French and Japanese hoping to emulate

the famous invitation to dinner which led to that fictional affair between an Iowan farmer's wife and a *National Geographic* photographer.

In April, Paul and Bridget Kearney, a separated couple from Essex, will stand on the bridge to renew their wedding vows before a local Justice of the Peace, part of a growing number of visitors who have fallen under the romantic spell of Madison County.

The attractions are perhaps

obvious. Apart from its importance in the election of the next President, a process which reaches its climax in the traditional voting caucuses on Monday, Iowa offers rolling rural farmland, pure air, clean water, the highest literacy levels in the country and, above all, the American experience free of crime and racial divide. More than 96 per cent of the population is white.

But the glare of Hollywood has muddled the tranquil

waters of Madison County and highlighted the most burning divide between the moderate and right wings of the Republican Party as it faces the first real test of the 1996 presidential campaign.

Before the emergence of Mr Waller, an unknown professor from the University of Northern Iowa, Winterset had prided itself on a more conservative cinematic image as the birthplace of Marion Robert Morrison, the American legend of True Grit himself, John Wayne.

The small white cottage on South Second Street had always served as a hideaway from the problems confronting the United States in the 1990s. Bedecked with American flags and film memorabilia, the Wayne house testified to a physically safe, demographically white and morally certain nation. A close friend of former President Reagan, Wayne had achieved a rare



Clint Eastwood and Meryl Streep in *Bridges of Madison County*. Their fictional romance has inflamed passions

stature among political leaders and remains the dominant teenage icon for both Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, and President Clinton.

The "Duke" still hovers over the town like the ghost of a tough, but benevolent, sheriff. His face adorns the street

signs, more than 200 films are available for free viewing at the public library and a child who lives on John Wayne Drive achieves certain status among his or her peers.

More religious members of the community, however, believe his posthumous influ-

ence as Madison County's moral mentor is under threat from the more popular and less conservative doctrine espoused in the antics of Kincaid and Johnson.

Marcia Gibson, a farmer's wife and secretary of the Word of Life Christian Centre, is one of many who have discarded the *Bridges of Madison County* in disgust. "Society does not even raise an eyebrow when it comes to infidelity. Do you think if my husband, Bill, left for the weekend, I would invite a complete stranger to my house for dinner?" she demanded. "This is meant to be a beautiful love story but it's nothing more than a tale of adultery. I don't remember seeing anything like that in a John Wayne movie. He represented morality. He was a patriot."

Increasingly, it is views such as these which are resonating among the electorate in Iowa as prospective candidates do battle for the top three places and the momentum to carry them through to the critical New Hampshire pri-

mary in ten days' time. While no Republican has been tempted by the free publicity of a visit to Madison County, each has been eager to court the dominance of the religious Right. Already there is a sense that the evangelical vote may be consolidating behind Pat Buchanan, the radical conservative commentator.

Mr Buchanan was considered an outsider in Iowa. But he is rising steadily in the polls on a message of moral rectitude, anti-abortion and support for the little man. Surveys yesterday placed the commentator third behind an embattled Senator Robert Dole, the frontrunner, and Steve Forbes, the millionaire publisher.

There was growing confidence in the Buchanan camp yesterday and among such staunch supporters as Bill and Marcia Gibson. "He represents the right to life and the sort of family values we had 50 years ago," said Mr Gibson. "Pat Buchanan reflects beliefs that John Wayne stood for. That's good enough for me."

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A detail from *The Girl with the Pearl*, part of the 21-work Vermeer exhibition in Washington

Freeze fails to chill ardour for Vermeer

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AS CEZANNE fever hits London, Vermeermania is reaching a climax in Washington.

The National Gallery's exhibition of 21 of the 17th-century Dutch master's 35 known works moves to Europe next week. Yesterday a queue of hundreds encircled the building in freezing temperatures in a last attempt to see the display. At the front of the queue was Kevin Sudeith, a 30-year-old artist from New York, who had arrived on an overnight bus at 4.30am for the 10am opening.

Behind him were two drama students from North Carolina who had finished rehearsals at 11pm, driven 500 miles overnight and were going to have to head straight back after just two hours viewing Vermeer's work.

Allen Goldberg, a Washington estate agent, had been paid \$100 (£65) by his employers to queue for four hours for tickets. A middle-aged New Yorker, her teeth chattering in the cold, said she had lied to her boss to get the day off.

Not since a private collection of Vermeer's works was sold in Amsterdam in 1696 have so many been brought together in one place. The

exhibition was a huge hit from the moment it opened on November 12, but achieved cult status thanks to two government shutdowns caused by budget disputes.

The media seized on the closure to illustrate the impact of the row, with politicians interviewed outside the gallery's locked doors. "We became the poster child of the shutdowns," said Deborah Ziska, the gallery's spokesman. When the exhibition reopened using private funds, it became a symbol of art's triumph over politics.

Sixteen of the exhibition's 90 days were lost, plus another four due to blizzards. The gallery responded by extending opening hours and is pushing more than 400 people an hour through the seven small rooms.

"People who have worked here for decades have never experienced this kind of pressure," said Ms Ziska, who says she receives desperate calls from people claiming to have terminal illnesses or frail parents in cars outside.

By the time the exhibition closes tomorrow more than 300,000 people from all 50 states and across the world will have seen it.

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Blessing of 'Satanic' jail and cost of tour questioned

Visit by the Pope draws criticism in Venezuela

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN CARACAS

IN WHAT is turning into the most controversial stop on the Pope's four-country Latin American tour, Venezuelans are asking why the pontiff is to bless one of the most infernal jails in the region.

"That place is a hell on earth," said Miguel Longa, 35, passing outside the Catia jail where the Pope was due to make a brief stop yesterday. "The mafia in there only know Satan's rules."

The Pope's visit to Venezuela has aroused mixed reactions in this country of 22 million people, where an estimated 35 per cent are practising Catholics. Many, including some priests, have questioned the cost and timing of the visit. They see it as an extravagant attempt by the Government to distract public attention from an economic crisis.

The Pope is due to deliver his blessing from a highway flyover, with a commanding view of the jail, situated about

200 yards away. He will do so without leaving his bullet-proof Popemobile.

The tight security precautions are well understood by Venezuelans familiar with the jail's record of violence, drug abuse and squalor. Built in 1966 to house 700 men, Catia now holds 3,200 inmates. Last year, about 100 murders were reported within its walls.

This week, a search of the prison turned up two pistols and 485 knives. It was conducted after a prisoner was stabbed to death during visiting hours last weekend. He was attacked by three inmates while talking to his mother. On Wednesday, four inmates were killed inside the jail in separate incidents.

Critics accuse the Government of hypocrisy, saying the Pope's three-day tour has been turned into a commercial circus while attempting to cover up Caracas's urban misery with a few brushes of paint. "The Christian sense of the

visit is missing," said Antonio Cova, a local commentator.

Organisers defend the preparations, pointing out that the Pope is visiting Venezuela on a pastoral mission, bearing a message of social justice.

But on peering around the side of the jail, it is clear that the walls hidden from the Pope's view have not received a lick of paint in years.

At the prison's south entrance, José Rojas, 31, a police inspector, was overseeing the transfer of 300 of the jail's most dangerous inmates prior to the Pope's arrival. He was wearing a bullet-proof jacket, and pulled out a steel plate from his vest dented by the impact of a bullet fired from a jail window the week before. "I was standing right here," he said, gazing up at the wall, pock-marked after guards returned fire.

Venezuela's prisons have long drawn criticism from international human rights organisations, which have

condemned their extreme overcrowding, inadequate diet and physical abuse by guards.

Corruption inside Catia is rampant, according to a former inmate, Edicto Ortega, 50, who spent 23 years in jails across the country. "It's a factory that creates an army of animals," he said. He recalled several occasions when he killed other inmates to protect his own life. "I have seen inmates take a machete and cut off someone's head and put it in a plastic bag and throw it out of the window," he said.

Local human rights advocates blame the corrupt and inefficient judicial system. Two-thirds of the country's 25,000 prisoners are awaiting trial, the Justice Ministry said.

The prison problems are only a symptom of the rising crime rate. Last month police reported 189 killings in Caracas, mainly in the slums on the outskirts of the city.

Leading article, page 21



One of 250,000 worshippers who attended a papal Mass during the tour

Sacked man shoots dead five Florida workmates

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN FORT LAUDERDALE

A DISMISSED city employee who threatened to return to his workplace and "do things" opened fire on former co-workers yesterday, killing five and wounding a sixth before killing himself, police said.

The former employee returned to an office trailer where city workers gather before dawn to prepare for the day's shifts and receive their work assignments in the Fort Lauderdale beach area. At least one person escaped and called the police.

Officers found the bodies, all shot through the head, inside the trailer, which is set back from the palm-fringed Intracoastal Waterway. The man had been dismissed months ago, an employee who just missed the shooting told a television station. "They had a drug test and he was fired because he tested positive. He made threats to come back and do things," said the worker, identified only as Doug. There was no police confirmation of those details.

Two men were taken to Broward General Hospital. One died there, and the other underwent emergency surgery, a nursing supervisor said.

The scene of the shooting is beneath a bridge on a narrow island between the Waterway and Fort Lauderdale Beach. It is an area frequented by luxury yachts at this time of year, and boasts swimming and marine attractions for winter visitors.

Notes reveal panic by Clinton aides over Whitewater

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

WHITE House officials may have improperly tried to influence statements by a potential Whitewater witness, according to intriguing new documents. The White House denied the charge.

The notes, seized upon by Senate Republicans, certainly convey increasing panic about awkward questions among the Clintons' inner circle shortly before a Whitewater special prosecutor was appointed two years ago. The hand-written notes were made by Mark Gearan, then White House Director of Communications, during a "meeting" chaired by Harold Ickes, Deputy Chief of Staff.

Mr Ickes was worried about what Beverly Bassett Schaffer would say. She was the former securities commissioner for Arkansas who, four months after her appointment by Bill Clinton, then state Governor, approved an unusual stock offering subtitled by Mrs Clinton, a lawyer for Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan, to keep the financial institution afloat. Madison, owned by the Clintons' Whitewater partner, subsequently collapsed at a cost to taxpayers of \$60 million (£39 million).

Mrs Schaffer has consistently denied that she had been under pressure to approve Mrs Clinton's idea because she owed her job to Mr Clinton. But Mr Ickes

wanted to ensure she would continue to support the Clintons' account that they had not sought special treatment. He proposed dispatching insiders to review her account "item by item".

He reportedly said: "Beverly Bassett is so **** important, if we **** this up, we're done. Let's not talk it to death, let's just get it done."

Yesterday Mrs Schaffer said she resisted efforts by three men with close ties to the Clinton Administration to persuade her to make public statements supporting the President and First Lady. She said she told them: "No way. I don't want to be drawn into the political response."

This is the second time that documents previously demanded by the committee have belatedly turned up, only to raise new questions. Senator Alfonse D'Amato, the committee's chairman, said the notes confirmed a continuing White House pattern of directing witnesses about their recollections in the hope of avoiding problems.

Mr D'Amato said he needed more time to call new witnesses, including Mr Ickes and Mr Gearan, and will ask the Senate to extend his committee's life beyond the end of February. This will ensure that Whitewater disclosures can continue deep into the election season.

Champion Kasparov takes on computer

FROM QUENTIN LEYS IN NEW YORK

A CHESS computer that can consider 50 billion positions in three minutes will take on the world chess champion, Garry Kasparov, today in the first multi-game regulation match between machine and man.

The IBM computer, Deep Blue, is the fastest chess-playing machine made, but experts expect Mr Kasparov to win. The champion has sometimes been compared to a computer, such is his ability to plan moves.

The six-game, eight-day match in Philadelphia carries a purse of \$500,000 (£326,000), of which \$400,000 will go to the winner. Should victory be Deep Blue's, it is not clear if the money will go to IBM or to the hofniss who developed the mainframe computer.

The event will be Deep



Kasparov: "a defence of the whole human race"

Blue's first taste of match conditions. When preparing for the encounter, Mr Kasparov asked to see examples of the computer's previous games, only to be told, to his anger, that it had played none. The lack of a pattern of combat will make it harder for the champion to predict how Deep Blue will play.

Champions have played machines before, but normally in speed or one-off games. Mr Kasparov does not have a 100 per cent record against computers, but in 1989 he played Deep Blue's predecessor, Deep Thought, and gave it a thrashing.

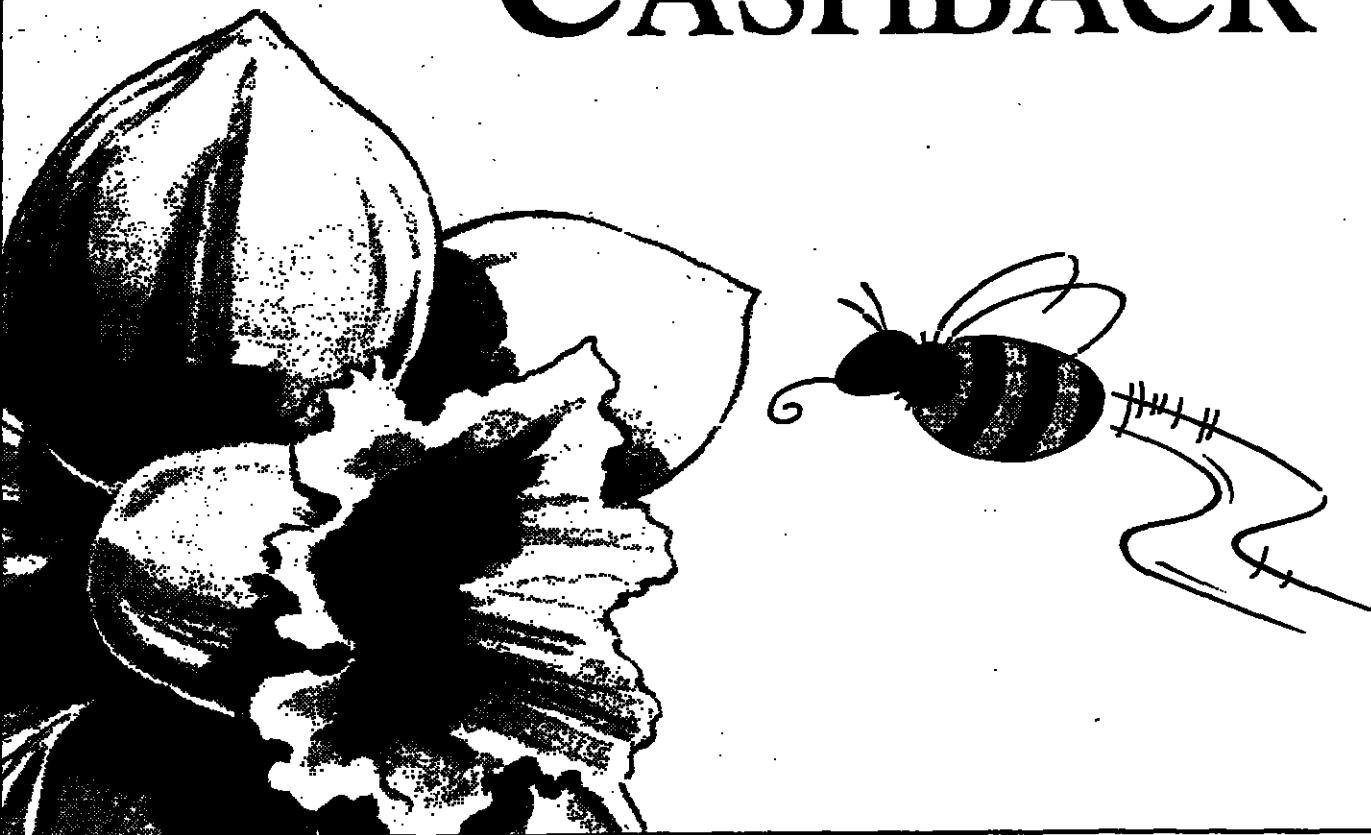
The champion has admitted that computers can be tricky to play because one cannot intimidate them. "Psychological pressure doesn't work," he said. The customary gamesmanship should therefore be absent from the Philadelphia Convention Centre, where the match begins this afternoon.

Mr Kasparov said: "This is a defence of the whole human race. Computers play such a huge role in society, but they must not cross into the area of human creativity."

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Bonn cracks down on black-market British labourers

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE German parliament yesterday gave the go-ahead to a law aimed at ending the kind of black-market building site work that inspired the television series *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*.

The move will hit British labourers, who have often been hired by Dutch agencies and then subcontracted to German building companies. According to German estimates, more than 40 per cent of some 80,000 Britons working on German sites have been drawing social security at home while earning about £10 an hour in Germany.

The new law which will come into force on March 1 and which will be valid until 1999, orders that European Union builders, handymen and dockers must be paid the German minimum wage as well as social security benefits. That will make them less attractive to German building companies: the German minimum wage is between £11 and £13 an hour. British workers were competitive, partly because they were as skilled as the Germans, and partly because the contractor did not have to pay the hefty social

security and insurance benefits. Taking into account social security, a German building worker cost his employer about £30 an hour. A British worker, even after the contractor pays off the Dutch agency, costs at most £20 an hour.

The new law is supposed to be enforced by the labour exchanges and the Customs service. Spot checks are already being made on building sites by German police. Employers breaking the law will be fined up to £45,000 and could be banned from bidding for public-sector contracts. This has been a political cause of both the Government and the opposition Social Democrats, who believe that it will help to persuade German contractors to employ more Germans. Some 90,000 German building workers are expected to lose their jobs this year and the whole construction sector has been flagging badly.

But the more important story is told in the bankruptcy courts. More than 5,000 German building companies collapsed last year and more than 6,000 are expected to go in 1996. Under these circum-

stances many builders are willing to bend or break the law to stay competitive. The most basic work on sites — even those close to the German parliament which yesterday passed the law — is being carried out by Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians working for little more than £2 an hour.

More skilled work is being completed by EU citizens — the British, Irish and Spanish — for higher rates. It is assumed that many British workers will find a way around the new law.

Beef confiscated: A hundred kilos (220lb) of British beef has been confiscated in a swoop by health inspectors in North Rhine-Westphalia. The state, along with Rhineland Palatinate and Bavaria, has imposed a total ban on the import of British beef because of a fear of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, the so-called mad cow disease.



Marina Krivonogova and fellow cult leader Vitali Kovalchuk in court yesterday

'Goddess' jailed for apocalypse chaos in Kiev

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

THE leaders of a doomsday cult, who caused pandemonium when they called out their supporters on the streets of Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, to witness 'Armageddon', were jailed yesterday.

Bringing to an end the five-year saga of the White Brotherhood cult, Marina Krivonogova, a self-styled 'living goddess', was sentenced to four years for endangering the health of her followers and causing criminal damage. Yuri Krivonogov, her former husband and the 'chief prophet', and Vitali Kovalchuk, the 'archbishop', were jailed for seven and six years respectively. They were ordered to pay £200 for damage caused when they stormed the cathedral of St Sophia, the country's holiest church, where the apocalypse was to begin.

Krivonogova, 36, dressed in her familiar white gown and turban, sat impassively as the sentences were read out, but a dozen die-hard cult supporters, the last remaining followers in a movement which once claimed 7,000, wept hysteri-

cally. 'She is not guilty, why is this happening?' said a tearful old woman as the cult leaders were led away, giving a defiant final 'blessing' to the public gallery.

The cult leaders once had a powerful following across the former Soviet Union, where teenagers in particular flocked to their movement. Like similar religious cults in the West, the White Brotherhood forced its members to fast, deprived them of contact with the outside world and convinced them that they would have to sacrifice their lives for the leader.

Krivonogova, a former Communist from the coal-mining town of Donetsk, predicted the end of the world at noon on November 14, 1993. This caused uproar in Kiev, where parents who had lost children to the movement flocked to find their sons and daughters. The authorities, fearing a mass suicide, scoured the city for the group's leaders, who were arrested in a scuffle with police inside St Sophia's medieval walls.



Walker: 'It has a prospect of turning bad'

Serb snub to Nato endangers accord

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Nato commander in Sarajevo issued a warning yesterday that the withdrawal of co-operation by the Bosnian Serbs in protest at the arrest of eight Serbs suspected of war crimes was looking ominous for the peace process.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Walker, who commands the 60,000 troops of the Nato-led Implementation Force, said: 'It does have a prospect of turning bad.'

His fears were echoed in London in a meeting between John Major and Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General. Foreign Office sources said that both men expressed concern at the impasse with the Serbs.

General Walker said the Serbs were wilfully breaching the Dayton agreement. General Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb army commander and himself an indicted war criminal, has stopped contact with the Serbs. Two senior Serb officers, General Djordje Djukic and Colonel Aleksa Krstanovic, were among those held by Bosnian Government police.

Last night Rajko Kasagic, the Serb Prime Minister, said that despite General Mladic's orders banning contact with the Serbs, talks could continue with Nato commanders. However, contact with the Muslim-Croat Federation 'cannot continue until our officers and detainees are freed'.

In Belgrade, Pavel Grachev, the Russian Defence Minister, said General Djukic and Colonel Krstanovic were involved in peace negotiations. The arrests could render the peace talks more difficult, he said.

Photograph, page 22

Three die in blast at Grozny protest

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL
IN MOSCOW

THREE people were killed yesterday in an explosion at a demonstration in the Chechen capital, Grozny, as President Yeltsin tried to find a solution to the conflict.

Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, was entrusted on Thursday with a mission to draw up a peace plan for Chechnya from a list of seven options. Mr Yeltsin has said that he will outline the plan next week in his home city of Yekaterinburg, where he is expected formally to declare that he is standing for a second term as president.

The explosion occurred at a rally in front of the shell of the presidential palace, the former seat of government of General Dzhokhar Dudayev, killing two civilians and one soldier and wounding seven others. The Chechens called it a 'provocation', while the Russian authorities said an explosive device was being carried by demonstrators when it went off.

Despite the blast, the rally went on. Up to 2,000 people have been protesting in the square for the past week, calling for a withdrawal of Russian forces and the resignation of the Moscow-installed government. They have thrown up barricades and clambered up the ruined palace to hang anti-Russian placards.

Resolving the Chechen conflict is a key electoral issue for Mr Yeltsin because it is the main issue over which he has lost the backing of the intelligentsia and middle classes, who used to be his strongest supporters. Since the bloody hostage crisis in the village of Pervomaiskoye last month many Russian politicians have started calling openly for a military withdrawal from the republic.

Boris Nemtsov, the Governor of Nizhny Novgorod, last week presented the President with a million signatures, calling on him to curtail the war and said that his support for Mr Yeltsin in the elections was conditional on him taking active steps to end the war.

The President has rejected these calls, but he acknowledges that the war has become a vote loser. 'If we withdraw troops, carnage will start in Chechnya,' he said in the Kremlin on Thursday. 'If we do not remove troops, there is no way of me becoming the President... We should find a compromise.'

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10 1996



Neville Davis, chairman and chief executive of Compel, said the computer services company had made a strong start to the second half. In the six months ended December 31 profits rose to £1.44 million from £1.19 million. Earnings were 6.06p (5.56p). The interim dividend is 1.54p (1.43p)

Eurotunnel considers mediation

By PATRICIA TERHAN

EUROTUNNEL directors will write to shareholders next week on the progress the company has made in refinancing negotiations with its 225 banks. The board met yesterday to discuss the statement and to decide whether to ask a French commercial court to appoint a mediator to handle negotiations with its banks.

The decision may be largely out of the control of the board since its auditors have given warning that the company is in danger of becoming technically insolvent. Under French law, this is the first stage of pre-insolvency proceedings and could put the matter in the hands of the French commercial court.

It would also limit the role of the Bank of England, which has, in the past, acted as mediator in difficult negotiations between a troubled company and its bankers.

Eurotunnel has been attempting to refinance its £8 billion debt since it suspended interest payments in September.

Gloomy picture for Tarmac and Wimpey

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

TARMAC and Wimpey, two of Britain's biggest building companies, increased fears of a deepening recession in the construction industry with gloomy trading statements yesterday.

The warning came as the companies concluded the £600 million asset swap first outlined two months ago.

Wimpey, which is taking on all of Tarmac's housebuilding operations and becomes the UK's largest housebuilder, gave warning that its pre-tax profit for 1995 would be much less than half that achieved in the previous year. It expects the figure to be about £15.5 million against £45.1 million in 1994.

The company, which is transferring to Tarmac its construction and minerals divisions, saw house sales slide in the second half of last year and said that incentive packages, worth up to £4,500 a house, have eroded margins.

Tarmac said its housebuilding had suffered from both margin pressure and tougher prices and that it expected operating profits to be significantly lower in spite of a slight increase in sales.

The company also revealed that it was making a £20 million provision relating to the building of a power station for Elm Energy which is the subject of litigation.

In spite of last year's experience, Wimpey maintained a bullish stance on housebuilding, to which it is now wholly exposed, and said the company had seen a 10 per

cent increase in business for the first few weeks of this year. Joe Dwyer, chairman, said: "We are beginning to see the return of the first-time buyer."

Mr Dwyer, whose company is now represented in both the first-time market where it has been a traditional player and the larger house sector in which Tarmac has been predominantly interested, added that incentives were starting to fall. At the level of £4,500 on a house, the average selling

price of which is £60,000, the incentives shave one percentage point off margins.

Wimpey said it expected to make cost savings of about £5 million on the integration of its expanded housebuilding interests with the streamlining of service operations.

The company will pay Tarmac £22 million in goodwill to balance the asset swap and is also paying £54 million as part of the transference of the construction operation depen-

dent on the finalisation of which contracts Tarmac will take on. The payment is to take the net assets, which are negative in construction operations, to zero.

Tarmac, which has far more scope for cost saving through the asset exchange than Wimpey, said that it intends that the inclusion of minerals and construction will not dilute earnings. To achieve that it will have to make savings of about £15 million to £20 million. It said more sweeping savings will be possible within two years.

Neville Simms, chief executive, said: "Over a two-year period we will be more aggressive in cost savings." He said Tarmac expected to draft its restructuring over the next few months, and forecast that there would be several hundred job losses which would fall largely in the construction division.

Tarmac's benefits will develop more over the long term, with a growing globalisation and consolidation of its minerals division being one of the most significant changes to the company. Mr Simms said that Tarmac would also gain advantages of increased purchasing power from its enlarged businesses.

Wimpey is looking for buyers for the businesses that it was unable to interest Tarmac in, such as its landfill, property trading, mining, environmental and energy operations. In total those interests are valued at about £20 million.



Joe Dwyer on site yesterday. Picture by Robin Mayes

BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3718.3	(+7.5)
Life long GP	2.25	(+0.02)
FT-SE All Share	2824.82	(+13.48)
Gold	374.10	(+4.00)
New York	5274.13	(+34.00)
DAX Composite	659.56	(+3.40)
Federal Funds	5.75%	(75bp)
Long Bond	90.74	(-0.01)
Yield	6.05%	(-0.01)
3-month Interbank	6.75%	(75bp)
Life long GP	108.74	(+0.01)
New York	1.5325	(+0.0002)
London	1.5321	(+0.0002)
DM	1.5321	(+0.0002)
JPY	7.7780	(+0.0002)
SFR	1.5319	(+0.0002)
Yen	163.58	(+0.01)
Yen Index	94.7	(+0.3)
London	1.4783	(+0.0002)
DM	1.4783	(+0.0002)
JPY	1.2382	(+0.0002)
SFR	1.0708	(+0.0002)
Yen	98.2	(+0.1)
Yen Index	98.2	(+0.1)
Tokyo close	Yen 107.25	
Brent 15-day (Apr)	\$18.25	(\$18.10)
London close	\$407.15	(\$408.05)
* denotes midday trading price		

Canny village investors outperform City slickers

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

THE village of Whiteparish in Wiltshire has one shop, a church and four pubs, but its amateur investment club beat the FT-SE 100 index last year by a remarkable 32 per cent.

Its 18 members, of all ages and incomes, made a total paper profit of 49.08 per cent between March and December, while the index rose 16.7 per cent.

Drawn together through an advertisement in the parish magazine, most are novice investors. They include a violinist at the Royal Opera House, an oil rig worker, a hospital administrator, three housewives, a computer programmer, and a couple of company directors.

Only 2,000 people live in the village, seven miles from Salisbury, but the group's

combined efforts have won them the accolade of the most successful investment club of the year from ProShare, which promotes share ownership.

The pick of their stock included SkyPharma, Unipalm, Memory Corp, Pelican and Stagecoach. Their biggest mistake was BT.

John Morris, Whiteparish Share Club chairman, described the group's investment strategy as a bit of common sense, research, and luck. "Members research sectors like breweries, technology or health and come up with their own ideas."

"Each investor pays £20 monthly into a pooled fund and we employ a stop-loss of between 15 and 30 per cent."

Their £1,500 prize has been

spent on Amstrad, Orbis, the security business, Verity, the loudspeaker maker, and Trocadero, the London leisure company.

The award for best new investment club went to Sirens, a group of professional women who invest ethically. Their investments, which rose 26 per cent, included Celltech, British Biotech and Laura Ashley.

They sold Merrydown when it distributed alcoholic lemonade, and their disappointment was Care UK, the nursing homes business. Their prize money was spent on Trocadero and Pilkington Glass.

Investment clubs are popular in the US, the best known being the Beardstown Ladies Investment Club of Illinois.

Britannia unveils payout plan

By KAREN ZAGOR

BRITANNIA Building Society has unveiled details of its cash reward scheme, but members will have to wait to find out how much they will get.

Members, including those making mortgage payments of more than £50 a month or with investments above £500, will be allotted points based on the size of their account and the amount of time they have been with the society. A flat 50 points will be allocated to extra Britannia products such as Peps and pensions. The value of the points will be announced at the end of the year. The first payments will be made in early 1997.

The society is also cutting 0.25 percentage points from its variable mortgage rates, starting April 1.

Customers flock to switch gas supplier

MORE than 60,000 families in the South West have signed up to ditch British Gas and buy fuel from rival suppliers when a pilot project for opening up the household gas market begins later this year.

With more than three months to go before the pilot scheme, British Gas is set to lose at least 12 per cent of its customers in the region. The pace of market share loss bodes ill for British Gas Energy, the supply business that is to be floated off by its parent in 1997.

Cast adrift by its parent, which will earn most of its revenues through fees from gas carried on its £18 billion pipeline system, BGE will be left to fight a rearguard action against aggressive competition from rivals with access to cheaper gas supplies.

Only 500,000 families in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset will be allowed a choice of supplier in the pilot scheme. But from April 1997 competition will be extended to a further 1.5 million households in southern England. Under the Gas Act passed last year, nationwide competition is required by January 1, 1999.

Customers in the South West are being attracted by substantial discounts. Swch Gas, owned by Swch, the electricity company, claims 32,000 customers have signed up to buy its gas at a price 23 per cent below the British Gas rate. That should offer savings of £80 a year on the average household bill of £350.

Amerasia Hess and Total Gas are understood to have signed up a further 28,000 would-be customers between them. Six other suppliers are also competing for the custom of families in the region.

British Gas is to sell its property support business, British Gas Properties Facilities Management, to Chester International, the property management company, for £7.5 million.

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WEEKEND MONEY



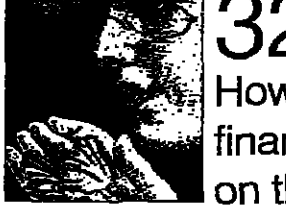
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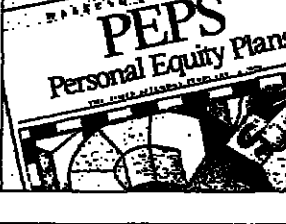
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WEEKEND MONEY GUIDES



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Privatisation and the Law of Unintended Consequences

It is known as the Law of Unintended Consequences. Your tropical paradise is perfect in all but one respect. There are too many damned mosquitoes.

You introduce a small freshwater fish to eat the larvae, but that fish also takes a fancy to the snails that are the only thing keeping your waterways clear.

A large species of tropical frog makes short work of the imported fish, so saving the snails, but it also snaps up the tadpoles of the native frogs. These, in their grown form, are the only natural check to the mosquitoes.

By the same process, privatisation, and various hairpin turns of policy required over the past decade, have made an ecological wasteland of at least two important industrial sectors, all through the Law of Unintended Consequences. I think we may now be heading down the tracks for a third.

Consider power generation. In the late 1980s, the decision was

taken to create a duopoly in England and Wales because the companies had to be big enough to include and support unprofitable nuclear stations.

Duopolies do not encourage competition. Better from the start would have been to create four or five different companies that cut each other's throats in proper capitalist fashion.

When the now-defunct Energy Department lost its nerve and decided the City would not buy the nukes, it was too late to adapt that duopoly structure. Within a couple of years, it became clear that the two players were using their market clout to the full.

Prices jumped on odd days to extraordinary and unexplained highs. But the Government was already introducing some new predators into the system, in the form of independent generators that burnt gas. Unfortunately, these plants were cheaper to run than much of the two generators' older plant, which could therefore regularly be pulled off the



MARTIN WALLER

variety of suppliers, but a wasteland where the dominant force has to split into two to limit potential liabilities — let's be blunt, to evade the creditors.

Now consider the railways. If you or I were asked to flag off a state rail system, and I personally don't do that sort of thing for a living, we might propose two layers. One company owns and is responsible for the track, the

signal boxes and the stations. The different routes and the trains can be parcelled up among any number of operators. They do not actually compete with each other any more than the 2.15 to Penzance competes with the 1.30 to Edinburgh.

But the track company receives revenues from the operators. If the track is not available for use, its revenues fall. If the trains do not run but the track is open, the operators lose fares but have to pay for the use of the track anyway.

A half-way decent regulator rides shotgun over the whole set-up — ideally a tough businessman like John Bridgeman who is making such waves at the Office of Fair Trading, rather than some ivory-tower academic.

But the rail industry is not being sold in two layers, but at least three. The track owner, Railtrack, exists; the train operators are coming gradually on board, disasters like last week's alleged fraud on the Mistry Line allowing. But

the third force is a troika of utilities that own the rolling stock and rent it to the operators. It is rather as if one firm owned the power plant and another went in each day to run it.

The system was designed this way because — well, no one can quite remember why, but it probably had something to do with allowing enough operators into the market who did not need to have huge amounts of capital tied up in rolling stock.

The problem is that on current evidence, there are not going to be hundreds of train fanatics each running their own few miles of track. There may be a dozen or more companies. The pattern of the bus market, increasingly dominated by a few names, suggests further consolidation a few years down the line — even unto a Big Four like that which dominated the system in 1945.

The Law of Unintended Consequences comes in because the existence of just three utilities owning and leasing the trains

could act as a real brake on investment in new stock. The rate you can get for that stock is subject, like anything else, to the laws of supply and demand.

Order and build more stock, and that rate falls, while you have to pay the interest on the cash raised to pay for the trains. It remains to be seen if three companies constitute a sufficiently open market and whether they will compete, rushing new product on to the market to replace their rivals' trains. The experience of the generators rather suggests not.

Investment on the track itself may be held back by the different vested interests of the operators that use it. Fastco wants a super new line on which to run its 120mph intercity stock, but Slowco, whose clapped-out kit rumbles from one rural whistle-stop to another down the shared track, cannot even begin to afford it on the government subsidies that are its main source of income.

So who pays for any of it?

Pearson to seek extra deals after \$580m buy

By ERIC REGULY

PEARSON, the publishing and television group, yesterday purchased HarperCollins Educational Publishing from The News Corporation for \$580 million and said it would seek additional acquisitions in the educational publishing market.

Pearson will combine the company with the American operations of Addison Wesley Longman, its educational publishing subsidiary. After the merger, Pearson will rank third in college textbooks in the US and fourth in schoolbooks.

News Corp. parent company of *The Times*, put HarperCollins Educational on the market in the autumn so it could concentrate on the broader consumer markets. It is retaining the larger divisions of HarperCollins, including HarperPaperbacks.

Frank Barlow, managing director of Pearson, said educational publishing was one of the company's main areas of growth. Pearson expects consolidation in the US book market to present it with further expansion opportunities. "We want to get bigger in the States," he said.

HarperCollins Educational consists of ScottForesman of Illinois, the publisher of textbooks for elementary, middle and high schools, and HarperCollins College of New York, whose titles are aimed at the university and higher education markets.

The two divisions had turnover of \$316 million and operating profits of \$51 million in the year to June 30. The purchase price represents a multiple of 11.3 times operating profits and will push Pearson's debt-to-equity ratio from 5 per cent to 22 per cent.

Some analysts think the additional debt will make Pearson less vulnerable to a takeover. Speculation that a bid, likely from an American media company, will emerge has been pushing up the shares in recent weeks.

Mr Barlow, however, said the debt-to-equity ratio was still low enough that "it wouldn't make much difference" in deterring a hostile bid. He said no potential bidder had been in contact with him. "I can't say the possibility of a bid is the first thing on my mind," he said.

Pearson shares nonetheless slipped, from 690p to 683p, on the belief that the HarperCollins Educational purchase makes Pearson a less likely takeover target.

Another departure at Laporte

Laporte, the chemicals company, saw another departure from its top ranks as David Wilbraham, chief operating officer, resigned to join Hickson, a rival company, as chief executive.

Bill Hoskins, Laporte's finance director, left last month, just after Ken Minton, chairman, Dr Wilbraham, 57, was due to retire later this year.

The company said it expected to announce a full complement of executive officers by the middle of the year. Laporte's shares ended 2p down yesterday at 632p.

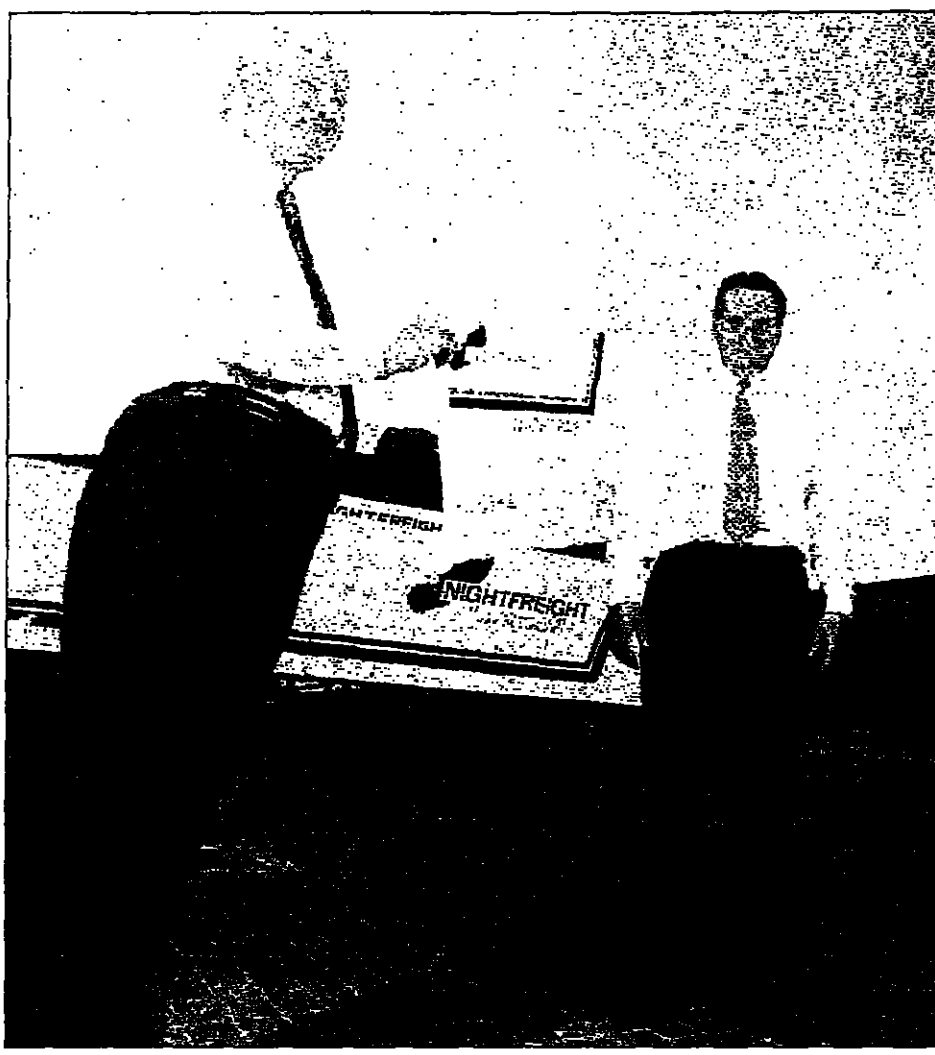
Regal deal

Regal Hotels Group agreed yesterday to give Granada another two weeks to decide whether to sell the White Hart hotels.

Regal agreed to buy 67 of the hotels from Forte on January 22, the day before Forte's purchase by Granada would give no indication which way it was leaning.

Power pact

Singapore Power and National Power have signed an agreement to bid jointly for power projects in the Asia-Pacific region.



Russell Black, chief executive, left, with Jim Painter, a director, of Nightfreight, the parcels group, where pre-tax profits were £4.62 million (£4.51 million) in the year to November 30. The total dividend is held at 3.38p a share, with an unchanged 2.25p final.

Executive leaves and shares slip as N&P issues warning

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

NURDIN & PEACOCK, the cash-and-carry company, issued a profit warning yesterday and announced the departure of Nigel Hall, finance director, saying he had "lost the confidence of the board".

The company said it expects pre-tax profits for the year ended December 29 to be about £19.3 million compared to City expectations of £24-£25 million. The warning sent its shares, which have

been edging down since October, skidding a further 10p to 148p. Pre-tax profit was £16.5 million in 1994.

The company said competition, particularly in drinks, and a shift in demand towards lower margin products had affected it badly. Trading for January shows like-for-like sales 4 per cent up on 1995, ahead of expectations.

David Sims, chief executive, said the bulk of the sales shortfall was in the fourth

quarter. He said Mr Hall, who was with the company 11 years and was paid £124,000 on a three-year rolling contract, would be entitled to some compensation, not yet worked out.

The 1995 results estimate does not include a profit of about £7 million on the disposal of Cargo Club, the US-style warehouse business sold to J Sainsbury last year, but does include losses from it of £2.5 million.

Baird hit after warning on profits

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

WILLIAM BAIRD, the clothing manufacturer, has given a warning that pre-tax profits will be below current market expectations and below those of the previous year.

City analysts immediately cut their pre-tax profit forecasts by about £3 million to £20 million for 1995 before exceptional.

For 1996, forecasts were trimmed by about the same amount to £25 million-£26 million. The company's pre-tax profit in 1994 was £25 million. The shares fell 13p to close at 168p yesterday.

The group, which is a leading supplier to Marks & Spencer, said that exceptional charges for the restructuring of its textiles operations, which it began in November, and the loss of about 600 jobs amounted to £9.8 million.

Baird expects to maintain its 1995 final dividend, "reflecting its underlying confidence in the group's future performance".

Julia Blake, an analyst with BZW, said that she was not surprised by the profit warning. She added: "It is very retrospective. Everyone has come out with a trading statement demonstrating that the trend in the second half was for lower sales and tricky margins."

The company said that it had experienced margin pressure in textiles, especially for its own-label products, following weak demand because of the unusually mild weather until late in November.

Clothing sales improved significantly in December, but that was not enough to compensate for slack business earlier in the second half of the year.

Baird's small engineering business posted a profit just above break-even as it too was hit by difficult trading conditions.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Games Workshop chief raises £3m

TOM KIRBY, the chief executive of Games Workshop, has raised almost £3.35 million through the sale of 1.16 million shares in the company, which is a retailer of fantasy war games. Mr Kirby, who is also a founder of Games Workshop, retains 2.59 million shares, representing 8.35 per cent of the equity, with a current value of £7.8 million.

Mr Kirby's disposal, at 290p a share, took place as the shares rose to a record high of 309p on Thursday, valuing the business at almost £96 million. Shares in Games Workshop were floated on the stock market in October 1994 at 115p each. The shares fell 6p to 303p yesterday. Last month, the company, which has stores in Britain, mainland Europe and Australia, reported a 28 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £3.17 million.

Mr Kirby's disposal, at 290p a share, took place as the shares rose to a record high of 309p on Thursday, valuing the business at almost £96 million. Shares in Games Workshop were floated on the stock market in October 1994 at 115p each. The shares fell 6p to 303p yesterday. Last month, the company, which has stores in Britain, mainland Europe and Australia, reported a 28 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £3.17 million.

Marr backs into brewer

MARR HOLDINGS, an operator of public houses in southern England, is reversing into United Breweries, creating a group with 277 pubs. United is paying £19.75 million for Marr, partly funded through a placing and open offer of new shares to raise £8.95 million. The enlarged company will be known as Inn Business. United Breweries reported a pre-tax profit of £304,000 for the year to November 24 (£1.01 million loss). There is again no dividend.

US acts on music piracy

THE US yesterday charged Japan with insufficiently protecting foreign music recordings from pirate copying and sought urgent talks to settle the row. The European Commission also said it had asked Japan to extend its copyright law to grant post the full 50-year protection for their recordings. It said that if the conflict was not resolved it would join the US in seeking bilateral consultations with Japan, the first step in the World Trade Organisation's dispute settlement procedure.

Shire valued at £106m

SHIRE Pharmaceuticals Group, which specialises in the marketing, licensing and development of prescription medicines, will be valued at £106.6 million when its shares begin trading on the stock market on Thursday. The company is raising £20.7 million through a placing at 175p a share. Schroder Ventures will retain its 15.5 per cent interest, while Johnson & Johnson Development Corporation, an existing shareholder, will invest a further £1 million.

Crest Nicholson setback

CREST NICHOLSON, the housebuilder, is holding the total dividend at 2p a share after suffering a decline in profits to £6.2 million from £11.1 million in the year to October 31. Profits from the residential division fell to £9.1 million from £15.2 million. Crest said house reservations in the first three months of the current year were ahead of 1995 and on budget. The final dividend, unchanged at 1.4p, will be paid April 19 from earnings of 3.02p (7.15p).

China turns to Airbus for new aircraft

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT



Li Peng, the Premier, said Chinese airlines may buy six A340s

CHINA is poised to end its year-long moratorium on buying new airliners by ordering up to 40 from Airbus Industrie, the European consortium, in a \$2 billion-plus deal.

The order would be a breakthrough for British Aerospace and its French, German and Spanish partners, who have to date sold only 35 aircraft to China, against 240 bought from Boeing of America.

Li Peng, the Chinese premier, told French businessmen in Beijing that Chinese airlines were interested in buying 30-40 Airbus A310 widebody jets and six sub-jumbo A340s.

An Airbus spokesman confirmed that talks are progressing well. But the consortium is expecting an early order for its smaller A320 aircraft, which it says are particularly attractive to China because of their ease of maintenance and low operating costs.

In spite of passenger numbers soaring by 10 per cent a year, CASC, the Chinese central aircraft purchasing agency, halted new aircraft purchases to allow airlines to improve maintenance regimes after a spate of accidents.

To support its sales campaign in the world's most promising aircraft market, Airbus is spending £50 million

on a joint venture maintenance centre and cockpit simulator in Beijing.

Airbus estimates that Chinese airlines will buy 1,320 aircraft worth \$100 billion over 20 years. As part of the sales effort, it is already sourcing parts from Chinese manufacturers, and plans to invite China to participate in developing a new super-jumbo.

Aero International Regional, the regional aircraft consortium in which BAE has a one-third share, is also negotiating to partner China, Singapore and Korea in developing a 100-seat jet.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank of England	Bank of America
Australia \$	2.12	1.98
Canada \$	16.35	15.42
Denmark Kr	48.36	48.28
France F	2.218	2.088
Germany DM	0.759	0.704
Greece Dr	9.38	8.56
Italy Lira	7.25	7.25
Japan Yen	8.20	8.21
Netherlands Gld	2.42	2.21
New Zealand \$	2.42	2.21
Norway Kr	10.47	9.67
Portugal Esc	246.50	228.00
Spain Ptas	166.00	166.00
Sweden Kr	11.34	10.54
Switzerland Fr	1.38	1.30
Turkey Lira	1.831	1.601
USA \$	1.631	1.601

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The two men could hardly be more different. But the Tory Lord Stevens and the Labour Lord Hollick have created Britain's first newspaper and ITV empire. Many outsiders say they won't survive the honeymoon...

Business Focus — The Sunday Times tomorrow

The WORLD of OLIVER & CLAIRE

HELLO, I'M OLIVER AND THIS IS...

...HELLO, CLAIRE.

A WORKING WEEK FOR: JULIAN METCALFE

An appetite to keep the customer satisfied

Sarah Bagnall meets one of the founders of Pret A Manger who has no diary and gives all employees his home telephone number

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

HE HAS all the hallmarks of an evangelical preacher. But all Julian Metcalfe's nervous energy, and there is a lot of it, is focused on feeding the body, not the spirit. Metcalfe, 36, is half of the partnership that set up Pret A Manger, the chain of sandwich shops that has revolutionised the concept of sandwich-making — and eating.

No more limp lettuce or stinky, plastic ham nestled in gently curling bread. No more painstakingly scraping margarine off baguettes that bear an uncanny resemblance to rubber. Now, sandwich munchers have Prets, as the chain is fondly called by its 800-odd staff.

Prets is no ordinary sandwich shop. Its stores are sparkling clean with a distinctive metal decor, offering a range of high-quality sushi, salads, cakes and vamped-up sandwiches at a brisk pace. It has also won the unusual distinction for a sandwich stall of an Egon Ronay star and, in 1994, was crowned king of the sandwich by the British Sandwich Association.

But Pret's success was not won easily. Driven by pure frustration about the lack of ability to grab a quality sandwich at lunchtime, Metcalfe and Sinclair Becham, his partner, set up Prets in 1986 with a £17,000 bank loan.

To begin with, it was an abject failure. "We started in London with one shop in Victoria Street. We worked at trying to get it right for three years. It was COMPLETELY wrong for three years. It was really bad. EVERYTHING about it was bad. The concept didn't work. We couldn't get the right food. It was AWFUL," says Metcalfe, who speaks in outsized letters to emphasise a point.

But Metcalfe and Becham, 37, had a clear idea of their intentions and a fastidiousness that ultimately carried them through. "Our aim was to try to take on these wretched fast-food operators. No one really sold natural normal healthy food as a fast-food retailer. I suppose that's our fault as customers because we are impatient. That's why McDonald's and these places are so unbelievably successful. They operate marvellous businesses. Just look at the way people flock to them," he says.

The Pret mission is to emulate the fast-food chains in serving customers equally as efficiently and equally as quickly, but to offer completely naturally made products at affordable prices.

The balance between value and quality has proved a winner, and the number of stores has swollen to about 40, generating annual sales in excess of £30 million. The chain continues to expand and last week saw the opening of an outlet in Oxford — Pret's farthest-flung outpost.

Metcalfe has a rather peculiar approach to running a business. Unlike his brethren in corporate boardrooms around the country, he doesn't know what

he will be doing that morning, let alone the next day. This comes down to the basic fact that he doesn't have a diary. "My partner is completely different and very structured. But I don't have a diary personally, so I don't have any idea what I'm doing from one day to the next. I don't really need one as I don't like having lots of meetings. They're a waste of time."

This complete lack of structure gives Metcalfe immense flexibility during the week to respond immediately to ideas and events. When a semblance of an idea bubbles into his consciousness, Metcalfe doesn't need to jot it down and place it in his "to do" tray for attention at a later date. "I don't see how you get things done if you are tied down," he says.

However, Metcalfe is not left to free-wheel through the week. Lisa, his personal assistant, does keep a diary and each morning grabs him when he arrives at about 9am from his home in Battersea, south London, where he lives in a converted school with Melanie, his wife, and three children.

"Lisa comes in and says this is what you are doing today. Sign this, sign this, sign this, read this and then I'm probably half way through and I leap up and run out to do something else," he says.

However, as Lisa's diary last week of Metcalfe's movements reveals, little is planned. The sole, regular feature of his week is the Tuesday morning senior management meeting. The three-hour meeting involves a brief discussion on the group's trading but mainly focuses on the major issues challenging the business.

Of the remaining hours in the week, Metcalfe says he spends 95 per cent of his time listening to customers and listening to employees. "My week is totally driven by the employees and the customers," he says.

Given Prets is a high-volume, low-margin business, the key to its success is ensuring that the business has a loyal customer base. "You have to get your customers to come back. Thousands and thousands and thousands of them. The only way you do that is trying to satisfy them. TIME and TIME again, and the way to do that is through the price of the product, the quality of the product and the attitude of the employees who work there," says Metcalfe.

Reflecting this attitude, Metcalfe's name and number are emblazoned across all Pret bags, encouraging customers to call if they want to talk. And they do. "I speak to every customer that calls. Quite a lot of people call just to test it and then when they get through they are so surprised," he says.

And every customer who writes in gets a letter back — something that Metcalfe feels fervently about. "I spent £4,000 on something the other day through an airline. I won't say who, but it was a nightmare, but I haven't even had a letter back. That's three-and-a-half weeks ago. If someone has a problem with a £2



Julian Metcalfe encourages customer feedback. He says: "A lot of people call just to test it and then when they get through they are so surprised"

sandwich I write back the same day," he says.

Metcalfe's openness and availability extends to the group's employees — all of them have his home telephone number. He spends large tracts of time trying to bring the best out of the "crew", as he calls the employees.

"I really do believe that coming to work is a real pain. I really do and always have. I must be a really lazy person. So you must make work challenging and rewarding," he argues. And while his attitude may not be that unusual, his approach most certainly is.

One way Prets tries to build team spirit is through a "shooting star" scheme, whereby everybody who finishes a course or gets promoted is awarded some money. But the individual is not allowed to keep the money. He or she has to give it to the people who helped to train them. Metcalfe explains: "If you have become a team manager then probably ten people went out of their way to show you how to do things. You're fine. You've got promoted. Your pay has gone up, but what about the people who helped you?"

Another example of his maverick approach was when last week he visited a shop and spotted the manager and assistant manager with their top buttons undone. Instead of leaping down their throats, he took the operational manager

shopping in Jermyn Street, promptly bought two £60 shirts and £40 ties and gave them to the button abusers. "At first they couldn't understand why, and then they realised and blushed. I said 'don't do it because it makes the customer think you are sloppy' and then I left. Neither of them had had their top button undone since."

He is equally as manic about quality. Last week Nelly, who plays a major part in the food side of the business, flew to Spain to check out the environment in which the chickens used by Prets live.

"It's taken us MONTHS to ensure all our eggs are properly free-range, not

bullshit free-range, not a stupid marketing campaign. Our supplier's chickens DO roam around the field and are NOT debeaked and DON'T have antibiotics. The same applies to all our food. Our cakes, bread, everything. We don't put chemicals in them."

All the group's sandwiches are made on site each morning. "You can't make thousands of sandwiches in a factory in the North and then sell them the following day. You wouldn't do that at home. Imagine you, this afternoon, made a sandwich at home and then put it in the fridge and then took it out of the fridge tomorrow. It's INCONCEIVABLE. You wouldn't do that."

Metcalfe's spontaneity and dedication to quality revealed itself in a recent trip to the group's Kensington store. "We sell a brand of crisps that I was deeply unhappy

about. I was so fed up seeing these huge trolleys of crisps that I ended up wheeling one out of the shop, down the arcade, through Boots and out on to the pavement and just got rid of them. I couldn't BEAR to see them any more."

Prets appears to have struck on the right recipe for success, but Metcalfe believes that to stay successful Prets must offer high quality and good service at the right price, while keeping a close check on the competition and taking the appropriate action.

"Looking at what other people are doing is very important. The trouble is that everyone does this, but the fact of the matter is what they DO about it? The great thing is that Pret accepts that action is required. A lot of people seem to monitor their own failure and do nothing about it. It's EXTRAORDINARY."

A bank where social history is keenly taken into account

Joanna Pitman unearths treasures among the archives at Drummonds

Prime party venues have been snapped up all over Britain four years in advance for New Year's Eve 1999 to celebrate the millennium. Messrs Drummond, the bankers, who were bought by Royal Bank of Scotland in 1924, will no doubt already be working on the menu to rival the 1900 annual partnership dinner at its Charing Cross premises on the eve of the last turn of the century.

A colourful collection of decorative menu cards forms just a part of the rich archives of the bank, a collection of documents, records, letters, scrolls, pictures and ledgers which provides an unusual social history of London going back more than 250 years.

Andrew Drummond was 29 when he opened his first banking ledger in 1717 as a young Scottish goldsmith recently moved south from Edinburgh to set up shop "at the sign of the golden eagle" in Charing Cross, an area where Scots had settled since Elizabethan times.

Scottish names predominate in the early accounts but as a tenant of Northumberland House, the last of the riverside palaces on the Strand, Drummond and his fledgling business benefited from the lavish entertainments laid on by the Duke of Northumberland, to which ministers and members of the nobility were invited.

But he also had early connections with men of the arts and craftsmen who congregated in the 18th century around St Martin's Lane and

the Strand. James Gibbs, architect of the new St Martin-in-the-Fields of which Drummond was a warder, opened an account, as did Alexander Pope, the poet, and John Zoffany, the painter. The last years of Drummond's life were prosperous ones. Britain's economic stability at home and colonial expansion abroad meant London had become Europe's largest city. New clients included Sir William Chambers and Henry Holland, the architects, Lancelot Capability Brown, the landscape gardener, and Thomas Gainsborough, the painter.

When Drummond died at the age of 81 in 1769, a contemporary remembered his boast that "I have done great things, and have almost everything I could desire. My son is married into a noble family, and I have

planted a colony of Drummonds round Charing Cross which appears to thrive."

The business was indeed thriving, so much so that the bank's premises on the west side of Whitehall, bought in 1760, were improved with ceilings and mantelpieces designed by Robert and James Adam, the fashionable architects of the day.

Despite near-bankruptcy, the firm again flourished and by 1775 there were nine dukes and 82 peers among the 2,850 account-holders as well as industrialists and entrepreneurs, including Josiah Wedgwood and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. But the bank was most proud of its royal patronage and letters in the archive show the extent of it, beginning in 1764 when Samuel Martin opened an account as treasurer to the widowed Princess of Wales. The Duke of Gloucester began to bank there in 1775 and in 1784 George III, "chasing to deal with a Gentlemen rather than addressing myself through others to the Common sort of moneyed Men", approached Henry Drummond for £24,000.

In the 19th century, customers included several prime ministers, Sir John Frederick Herschel, the astronomer, and Sir Humphry Davy, the chemist. Today Drummonds keeps its history books open and maintains a number of accounts that date back to the 18th century. Social historians will continue to delight for many years in the riches of its archives.



Some of the rare menu cards housed at Drummonds

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Reliance	2	4	2	4	7	12	8		
M&G	37	24	14	8	11	13	21		
Perpetual	2	3	4	3	2	2	2		
Schroder	9	4	5	5	4	5	3		

Sources: Extract from Investment Intelligence. Group weighted performance table of all unit trusts offered by the 40 largest unit trust management groups measured by total fund size to 1.2.96.

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Investors turn nervous as profit warnings multiply

ANOTHER spate of profit warnings and downgrades weighed heavily on investors with share prices dipping below 3,700 at one stage.

Nurdin & Peacock, the cash and carry operator, fell 10p to 148p after warning that profits for the year just ended will fall short of expectations. David Sims, chief executive, blamed the continuous erosion of margins. Brokers had been looking for up to £25 million but he said the figure is likely to be pitched somewhere between £19 million and £20 million. Last year the group made £16.9 million. The warning was accompanied by the abrupt departure of Nigel Hall, finance director. The group has promised to maintain the final dividend.



David Sims saw Nurdin & Peacock shares slip 10p

A profit warning also sent William Baird tumbling 13p to 108p, after touching 159p. The clothing group said pre-tax profits, achieved before restructuring costs of almost £10 million, will fall short of last year's £25.1 million, although the total dividend would be maintained at 9.5p.

The mild weather was blamed for the setback, which had put margins under pressure. Improved clothing sales during December had failed to offset the earlier problems.

Tarmac and George Wimpey signalled that their £600 million asset swap was to go ahead. But Tarmac rocked the market with news that profits during 1995 would be hit by a £30 million provision. It relates to a power station contract which has yet to be signed off. As a result, profits were expected to drop from £107 million to £65 million. Brokers had been looking for profits of £95 million. Tarmac still rose 25p to 120 1/2p.

Wimpey fell 5p to 135p after giving warning that profits would fall sharply in the second half resulting in a full year outcome of only £15.5 million compared with £45.1 million last time. It blamed a downturn in house sales.

Unilever, the Anglo Dutch food group, says the cost of closing businesses in the US and restructuring its European operations will be £235 million. The figure will be included in the year-end results. The shares responded with a fall of 1p to £12.89.

Alpha Airports slipped 1p to 108p as brokers began downgrading their forecasts following a profits warning. Following some gloomy com-

ments accompanying the interim figures, the group now says that pre-tax profits will be lower than the £21.4 million achieved in 1994. Greig Middleton, the broker, has lowered its forecast for 1996 by £1 million to £26 million and has cut its estimate for 1995 by £2 million to £20 million.

End of the week bear closing

Burmah Castrol surged 51p to £10.39 after a strong buy recommendation from Merrill Lynch Smith New Court, the broker, which says the shares are undervalued and may be worth £12.14 to £14.66. It says the lubricants business alone is worth £3 billion and pitches the company's break-up value at about £20 a share.

however, no disguising what has been a difficult time for investors, with the index falling 65 points on the week.

Once again turnover fell a lot to be desired and by the close of business a total of 806 million shares had changed hands.

Profit-taking left MAA 13p lower at 435p in the wake of this week's proposed £2.9 bil-

Corporation, parent company of The Times. Brokers said it was a step in the right direction for Pearson, but the shares finished 7p lower at 683p, after briefly touching 676p. Pearson share price has been scaling new highs recently on suggestions that it is a potential bid target. Last week Pearson's name was being linked with Viacom, the US media group.

Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker, continues to take a cautious view of J. Sainsbury following a meeting with the company earlier this week. Laing has chosen to reiterate the view that clients should switch into Tesco, unchanged at 282 1/2p. Sainsbury also finished all-square at 387p.

There was further heavy turnover recorded in Smith & Nephew as the price rose a further 5p to 192 1/2p. Several brokers have had a change of heart about prospects for the group. Harman Property returned from suspension 14p lower at 34p after the breakdown of reverse takeover talks with Galliard Homes. As if to rub salt in investors' wounds, the group announced write-offs totalling £1 million.

Games Workshop fell from a record high of 309p to finished 6p lower at 303p after Tom Kirby, chairman, sold 1.15 million shares at 290p reducing his remaining holding to 2.54 million.

Cortec International, the pharmaceutical group, jumped 24p to 241p after the company spoke to fund managers at a presentation arranged by Nomura, the Swiss broking house.

GILT-EDGED: Investors had to endure another volatile session reflecting uncertainty in overseas bond markets. In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt touched a low for the day of £108 1/2 before rallying to close £1 1/8 firmer at £109 1/8. The number of contracts completed grew to 71,000. Among conventional issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2013 rose three ticks to £100 1/8, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was all-square at £104 1/8.

NEW YORK: Shares on Wall Street pushed higher in morning trading as the market followed through on the strength of the past few days, propped up by the continual flow of cash into mutual funds. The Dow Jones industrial average at midday was up 34.68 points at 5,574.13.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5574.13 (+34.68)
S&P Composite	599.50 (+3.49)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	2094.82 (+193.48)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	11910.28 (+21.49)
Amsterdam:	
AEX	501.99 (+0.27)
Sydney:	
ASX	2271.81 (+1.3)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	2411.83 (+18.27)
Singapore:	
SEAC	2456.44 (+30.78)
Brussels:	
General	8992.75 (+80.41)
Paris:	
CAC-40	1960.65 (+4.98)
Zurich:	
SIX	731.80 (+1.18)

London:	
FT 100	2727.7 (+3.6)
FT 100	2716.3 (+2.1)
FT 100	2716.3 (+2.1)
FT 100	2716.3 (+2.1)
FT 100	2716.3 (+2.1)
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RECENT ISSUES	
Ballynary Hldgs	5
Century Inns (20)	120
Dmaic	72
MediaKey (40)	65
Nthn Peim Wts	8
Revelation Plc	105
Self Sealing Sys (4)	55
Skypharma S Wts	9
Viewline	192

RIGHTS ISSUES	
Berkley Gp n/p (435)	84
Oxford Mill n/p (235)	84

MAJOR CHANGES

RISKS:	
App Holo	241p (+24p)
Flying Flowers	139p (+8p)
TDG	215p (+10p)
Color Corp	266p (+12p)
Danka Bt Sys	700p (+30p)
Arcturus	435p (+18p)
Geopac	265p (+5p)
Chroscland	270p (+8p)
Boosey Hawks	595p (+17p)
Cookson	294p (+8p)
Photobank	363p (+12p)
London Clubs	488p (+12p)
Mael	835p (+9p)
Reckitt	1250p (+10p)
Abstract Mead	515p (+10p)
Pason	815p (+10p)
Asian	545p (+10p)
Scotia	605p (+9p)
BAT	567p (+8p)
Fairplay Gp	585p (+8p)
Micro Focus	825p (+8p)
Whitbread	724p (+9p)

FALLS:

Wm Baird	168p (-13p)
Telecom	728p (-22p)
MAI	435p (-5p)
JD Wetherspoon	728p (-4p)
Selon Health	438p (-4p)
Jardine Math	549p (-4p)
Unilever	1289p (-1p)
Zeneca	1235p (-1p)

Closing Prices Page 39

TEMPUS

Upstream goes downhill

TRANSOIL, the proposed British Gas upstream and pipeline business, is paying a high price for being allowed to shuffle off its problematic take-or-pay contracts into British Energy, the trading business. Needing to create a financially plausible company, British Gas was required to spin off Energy with no debt but, more important, the company will be supported by the Morecambe Bay gasfield.

Morecambe Bay accounts for 70 per cent of British Gas's gas production and, excluding the pipeline network, is the largest British Gas assets, worth £3 billion. Without the benefit of Morecambe Bay's £500 million of cashflow it is difficult to see how the disabled British Energy could survive. Unfortunately for British Gas investors, Energy's gain is Transco's loss.

Morecambe Bay was the cornerstone of British Gas's upstream strategy, prior to the

proposed carve-up. The cashflow helped to fund more exploration and gas from Morecambe flowing well into the next century gave British Gas comfort that it could put money into long-horizon projects such as the Karachaganak gasfield in Kazakhstan.

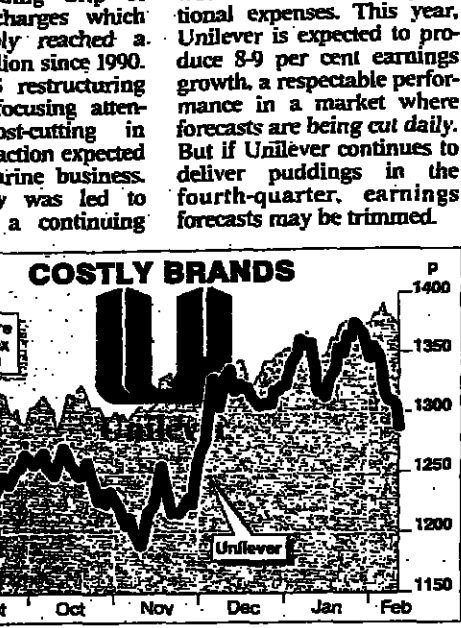
Burdens with £600 million of pipeline investment and the British Gas dividend which (assuming it is maintained) costs £630 million (Transco will have little cash to invest per year. Transco's borrowing costs will rise after the demerger and having seen the company do the splits, its future partners in exploration may demand more financial guarantees than they ever requested from British Gas. For investors, there is no escaping the conclusion that Transco's upstream potential has been severely curtailed by the loss of Morecambe and its rating will suffer accordingly.

Unilever

UNILEVER ought to be the investment of choice this year. In a slowing world economy, the defensive merits of a big manufacturer of branded consumer goods should become apparent. Sadly, however, the Anglo-Dutch company is unable to claim the mantle of favoured share while it chips away at expectations with periodic restructuring charges.

Hence the City's negative reaction to news of a £225 million charge for the final quarter of 1995. The decision to close down fabric powder production at a US plant is unsurprising and should produce benefits. Competition is eroding Unilever's market share in soap powders and recent efforts to streamline the liquid detergents business in the US generated solid gains.

Costly Brands



UK Equities

NOT a week goes by without a profit warning. Last autumn it was the chemicals sector, followed by textile companies and more recently gloom from builders and consumer product manufacturers. Only last summer, however, analysts were forecasting market earnings growth of 15 per cent or more in 1995 and double-digit growth in 1996.

The warm feeling from a good spring reporting season persuaded forecasters to ignore economists who gave warning of an adjustment. Earnings estimates later plummeted and the general consensus for 1995 is growth of 12 per cent followed by 8-9 per cent in the current year.

Having been burned by too much good news last year, the worry in the current reporting season is that investors will do nothing on bad news in the forthcoming results season. But the numbers will be historic and the

Wimpey

WHO would want to be in Wimpey's boots? Unmitigated exposure to housebuilding does not sound like a recipe for easy sleep. Yesterday Wimpey sealed its takeover of Tarmac's housebuilding division, becoming the UK's largest housebuilder. Tarmac appeared to get the short straw in the asset swap, taking over minerals and construction, two operations on which Wimpey had struggled to put a shine. Tarmac's housebuilding operation will take Wimpey up to 12,000 units a year—a level that will leave the builder with a financial burden each year in replacing stock. Wimpey is confident that the market is on the turn, reporting a 10 per cent increase in business so far this year. But with such mixed signals coming out of housing the company's fingers must be firmly crossed. It was, it admits, similarly confident about prospects this time last year.

Wimpey's advantage is short-term rewards. If volume returns then it will see immediate benefits from greater exposure. The down side, however, is large and the company will have little bargaining position in its role as a hostage to the economy.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Current price	Week's change	Notes
Lloyds Chemicals	+475p	Gene counter-bid
Udy's Media	+520p	Merger with IAI proposed
MAI	+63p	Merger proposed and bid talk
Scottish Television	+613p	Bid speculation
York-Tyne Tees	+900p	Speculative buying
Ferguson International	+255p	Profits warning
Frost Group	+11p	MAI increases stake
Amstrad	+35p	Encouraging prospects
William Baird	-168p	Profits warning

COMMODITIES

ICE/US (London & Miami)				GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES			
CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)				WHEAT		BARLEY	
				Gene L/0		Gene L/0	
Brent (May 2000)				Mar	117.00	Mar	119.00
Brent (Jun 2000)				Apr	117.00	Apr	119.00
Brent (Jul 2000)				May	117.00	May	119.00
Brent (Aug 2000)				Jun	117.00	Jun	119.00
Brent (Sep 2000)				Jul	117.00	Jul	119.00
Brent (Oct 2000)				Aug	117.00	Aug	119.00
Brent (Nov 2000)				Sep	117.00	Sep	119.00
Brent (Dec 2000)				Oct	117.00	Oct	119.00
Brent (Jan 2001)				Nov	117.00	Nov	119.00
Brent (Feb 2001)				Dec	117.00	Dec	119.00
Brent (Mar 2001)				Jan	117.00	Jan	119.00
Brent (Apr 2001)				Feb	117.00	Feb	119.00
Brent (May 2001)				Mar	117.00	Mar	119.00
Brent (Jun 2001)				Apr	117.00	Apr	119.00
Brent (Jul 2001)				May	117.00	May	119.00
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PEPS SPECIAL

The latest
guide from
Weekend MoneyLeaseholders
sold short by
freehold lawSara McConnell on the need for greater
protection from powerful landlords

Elderly people who have bought flats in private retirement homes are among thousands of leaseholders whose right to buy their freehold is being ignored by their landlords. Many of these landlords are household name companies who buy and sell freeholds as part of large commercial property portfolios.

Leaseholders often discover the freehold has been sold behind their backs, giving them no chance to buy. Some new landlords then raise service charges and adopt bullying tactics to force people to pay. In some cases, they ignore specialist services people have paid for, such as resident wardens.

Ministers are under increasing pressure to stop abuse of legislation intended to give leaseholders first refusal if their freehold is up for sale. Revelations in *The Times* and elsewhere of such abuses have forced John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, to include a last-minute draft of amendments to the Housing Bill going through Parliament. But the government-funded Leasehold Enfranchisement Advisory Service (LEAS) will tell him next week that the amendments do not go far enough.

Campaigners say that without far-reaching reforms leasehold properties will become increasingly difficult to sell, with consequent dire effects on the housing market. Joan South

of the Leasehold Enfranchisement Association (LEA) says: "Who is going to buy into a situation where so-called homeowners can be sold from one landlord to another, or come under control of the nightmare landlords whose service charge excesses are chronicled daily in the press?"

Advisers on leasehold rights are particularly concerned about the plight of elderly leaseholders, many of whom have sunk their life savings into retirement homes.

Rudi Reeves of the Advice, Information and Mediation Service for Retirement Housing (AIMS) said: "Breaches of the law have happened in retirement homes on a number of occasions. Leaseholders are realising that the only way out

of it is to buy the freehold. But many older leaseholders have made a big financial investment... and they are wary of the extra cost of buying the freehold."

Under Section 5 of the Landlord & Tenant Act, 1987, leaseholders have an absolute right to first refusal when the freehold is up for sale, but landlords have been flouting the rule with impunity because there are no sanctions against doing so. Leaseholders can demand that a new landlord sell them the freehold for the same price he paid. But they have to act within two months, which is not long enough for many people to realise the freehold has changed hands.

The amendments to the Housing Bill would make it a criminal offence for a landlord selling a freehold to fail to offer first refusal to leaseholders. The leaseholders will also have longer to exercise their rights if they discover their freehold has been sold: four months from when they discover the sale to demand information, and then six months to serve a purchase order.

But the LEAS believes that it should be also mandatory for local authorities to prosecute selling landlords who ignore the law and the proposed maximum £2,500 fine should be raised. Third parties who buy in spite of the sanction, should have to prove what price they paid.



Victory in sight: Rene and Eric Tauber who want to buy the freehold of their flat at Tower Grange, Salford

Tenants in
fear of the
landlord

Owners of leasehold homes are being overcharged by landlords, both private and public, and threatened with forfeiture of their homes if they object. To at least one block of flats in London, the threat of forfeiture is a reality. Appeals to local authorities to force landlords to produce supporting documents for service charge demands have fallen on deaf ears as cash-strapped authorities show themselves reluctant to "act as a prosecutor" and prosecute. The cost and uncertainty of "not a procedure" and possibly people from fighting for

Flatowners take fight for
leasehold reform to Commons

Leaseholders in ten retirement flats this week won a victory over the Co-operative Bank, after the intervention of *The Times*. The bank admitted it had been wrong to sell the freehold of the flats without giving the leaseholders right of first refusal and has now promised to pay the extra costs of the tenants in exercising their right to buy back the freehold from the new landlord.

In a statement, the bank said that solicitors acting for it had taken a "commercial decision" not to give tenants first refusal. The solicitors had concluded that "tenants' rights were adequately protected and no losses would accrue". The bank now concedes this was wrong.

Alvin Dwyer of Liefman Rose, solicitors, who is acting for a majority of the leaseholders, welcomed the Co-op's decision. Goldhawk Properties, the new landlord, this week agreed to sell the freehold to the leaseholders.

The leaseholders, including Rene and Eric Tauber, own the retirement flats in Tower Grange, Salford, near Manchester. The first they learnt of the impending sale of their block was last October, when Northern Counties Housing Association, the then managing agents, told them that the Co-operative Bank had repossessed the block when the original developer went into receivership in 1993 and wanted to sell the freehold.

They then discovered the Co-op had sold the block to Goldhawk Properties, of Golders Green, north London. Under Section 5 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987, the Co-op should have given leaseholders first refusal.

SARA MCCONNELL

Solicitor
seeks C&G
bonus suits

VERNON & SHAKESPEARE, a Birmingham firm of solicitors, is claiming to be able to help aggrieved Cheltenham & Gloucester customers, who feel they missed out on bonuses in the Lloyd's takeover.

But its help comes at a price — about £100 per case, just to find out whether those who failed to be eligible for the pay out have any case in law. The solicitor is writing to 2,000 members of C&G Alternatives — an action group set up at the time of the takeover to demand alternatives. If all members of C&G Alternatives take up the offer, Vernon & Shakespeare could make £200,000 just to consider whether action is possible.

The C&G says about half a dozen people have contacted it to complain about the mailshot. Some were C&G customers who had received the payout, and who had originally been members of C&G Alternatives for reasons other than being excluded from the bonus.

C&G says anyone with a grievance against the society because they felt they had been excluded from the payout could go to the Building Societies Ombudsman, which is free. He has considered many complaints about the C&G takeover and has found that it has acted within the law. The ombudsman still has some cases to consider.

Tony Powles, a Vernon & Shakespeare partner, said: "C&G Alternatives sent me through a list of names to see whether we could take the matter any further. If we can get enough people together, then we can see if we can get a group action going."

Paul Rivlin, head of C&G Alternatives, questions Vernon & Shakespeare's view. "Our advice said any legal action would be pretty speculative. There was not enough certainty of a legal action being successful," he said.

CAROLINE MERRELL

Weekend Money
is edited by
Anne Ashworth

Quick sales that end up in court

The trustees of Henry Smith's Charity were this week forced to defend themselves in the Court of Appeal against one of the tenants fighting the charity's sale of its South Kensington estate to the Wellcome Trust.

Smith's Charity angered leaseholders when it sold the estate to Wellcome last summer without offering tenants first refusal to buy. Every day leaseholders across the country are discovering that their freeholds have been sold to others before they realise it. They then have to take expensive legal action to buy the freehold from the new landlord.

Many large commercial property owners, including Smith's, argue that the selling landlord does not have to offer first refusal to leaseholders. Instead, the seller can

leave it to the purchaser to ask the leaseholders if they are interested in the freehold. If enough of the qualifying tenants show interest, they can negotiate to buy.

Sellers usually claim they have chosen the latter route for "commercial" reasons because they can get a quicker sale. Leaseholders offered the freehold by the purchaser have less time to indicate their interest. They have only 28 days to act instead of two months, as they would if offered the freehold by the seller. John Gummer, the environment secretary, has now conceded that 28 days is too short, and he proposes to extend the period to two months in an amendment to the Housing Bill.

But it is not yet clear if a landlord selling a property can legally choose to leave his

purchaser to negotiate with the leaseholders. Zipporah Mainwaring, a Smith's leaseholder, argued in the Court of Appeal that Smith's Charity had been wrong to sell the estate without giving them first refusal, and that leaving Wellcome, as purchasers, to contact leaseholders was not an alternative.

The appeal court reserved judgment, but its ruling will be eagerly awaited by the 30 tenants of Hylda Court, a 1930s block of flats in North London.

Hylda Court was owned by the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society until 1993, when it sold the block to Frogmore Estates, a property company.

Liverpool Victoria wrote in a confidential selling brochure issued by its agents that

it "did not propose to serve any notices under Section 5 of the Act (requiring the seller to give leaseholders first refusal), once terms are agreed for a sale. Further, it will be a condition of the contract that the purchaser will not serve any notices under the Act until after completion has occurred."

Liverpool Victoria said it had been a condition of the sale that Frogmore, as purchaser, should offer the freehold. It said: "We believe we haven't eroded tenants' rights and we have obeyed the law."

It had been keen to make a quick sale because it had too much residential property in its portfolio and had been told that it would be quicker not to negotiate with the leaseholders.

SARA MCCONNELL

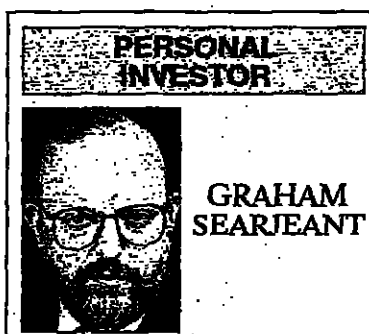
Cedric is innocent, OK

Cedric Brown's undignified exit from the executive suite should worry any hard-working salaryman. Even at the end, the scapegoat is under attack for being allowed to receive his late boosted company pension when British Gas is doing so badly. It hardly bodes well for an era of expanding private pensions if rights built up over 43 years service are still seen as corporate largesse for higher orders to dole out at their discretion.

Mr Brown has been reinvented as the managerial version of Sid, the common man dreamt up by pop adfolk 10 years ago as a condescending put-down for millions of small investors. Sid was ushered by City smoothies into a safe but existing new world of privatised enterprise, and offered a handful of used fivers by way of "incentives", as a forerunner of rewards ahead. Ignoring these used fivers, £100 invested in British Gas at its 1986 launch would now be worth about £160. If Sid had put the money in a respectable unit trust, it should be worth at least £225.

Much the same fate eventually befell the gasman. Under Sir Denis Rooke, who created the successful company sold to us in 1986, there were no "fat cats" on the board. Sir Denis saw privatisation as a mere change of owner. After Mr Brown became boss, City influence brought in Richard Giordano to change that culture. Mr Giordano first brought "fat cat" salaries from America to Britain 17 years ago. His new salary structure neatly fitted his £450,000 as part-time chairman.

Aside from the salary debacle, how-



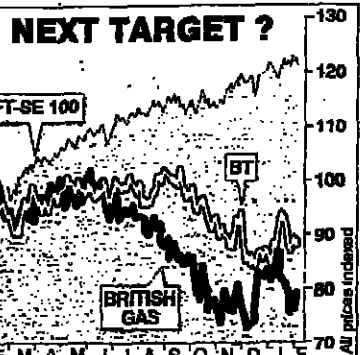
GRAHAM SEARJEANT

ever, the troubles now afflicting British Gas shareholders and customers stem entirely from massive and indecently hasty government intervention. Having abjured picking winners, ministers decided to pick losers, destroying successful private companies by live dissection in the name of ideology. Tim Eggar, the cut-and-run Industry Minister, accelerated the onslaught on British Gas after insisting on the most painful option of immediate mass closure for the coal industry. He represents a perverse mentality that values policies higher, the more unpopular they are. For Gas investors, that has brought the heavy losses that tend to go with forced liquidation of one's business.

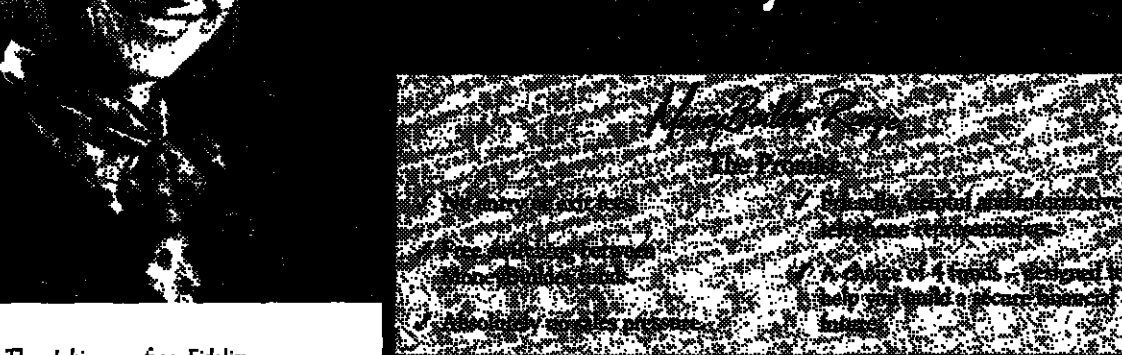
Symbolically, both Mr Eggar and Mr Brown will finally quit the scene at much the same time as private investors are encouraged to sell their devalued stock in the smaller, superficially riskier, part of a split British Gas. That is for City convenience rather than shareholders' interests, which may prove quite different once details emerge.

There is a more urgent warning. As a glance at the chart will show, our BT shares have fallen almost as steeply as British Gas over the past year, for the same reason. Regulation set up to guard against abuse of monopoly power is being perverted into a drive to destroy the privatised company, through a two-way plan to slash profits and shrink custom. As the information superhighway force illustrates, investors should not rely on more sense from Labour. British Gas foolishly angered its 1.8 million shareholders instead of harnessing their political power.

BT may be smarter but there are few signs yet. Utility shares are often more depressed ahead of regulatory reviews. In the long run, however, the 2.5 million holders of BT would do best either to sell their shares or to lobby their nearest Tory MP while there is still time.



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More branches to be pruned as takeovers bite

Nearly 3,000 branches of high street banks have closed in the last five years, and after the Lloyds takeover of TSB, analysts are forecasting more closures.

A private Bill to merge Lloyds and TSB — enabling customer accounts to be transferred into the new bank — is expected to reach Parliament within the next 18 months. This could mean that where branches of TSB and Lloyds sit side by side one may have to close. "Over time, there will be some amalgamation of branches," said TSB.

Ed Sweeney, general secretary of the Banking Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu), which has more than 130,000 members, said: "We will be lobbying MPs hard to oppose this Bill if it means more job losses and a worse choice for customers."

Bifu added: "It's a moral judgment. It might be okay to close a branch commercially, but it's not very sensible socially. What does it mean to the community and the staff? It also affects the economy as a whole."

Customer complaints reached their peak in the early 1990s when the leading banks were accused of chopping branches, cutting staff, removing managers and pushing up charges. Customers were hit hardest in rural areas, where often there was only one bank. When that bank closed, villagers were forced to switch to the Post Office's Girobank or to incur the cost of travelling into town.

"Banks make profits from local communities and their customers yet they're deserting them," said Bifu. "They tend to be the non-profitable branches in remote areas that close — those that elderly

Morag Preston examines the personal cost as banks seek to economise on their networks

people tend to use. It becomes a vicious circle. That branch might not make a profit, but the company as a whole does. "It's particularly hard for small businesses cashing up at the end of the week, forced to take large sums of money on a longer journey."

Lloyds and TSB have about 2,850 branches, Lloyds said: "Last October, before the

money. Otherwise, it means customers from other branches having to subsidise it," said Lloyds. "There's a reason why people aren't using sub-branches so much. Presumably, more people are travelling to work, or they're drawing cash at large supermarkets."

Lloyds added: "There's always a lot of resistance to

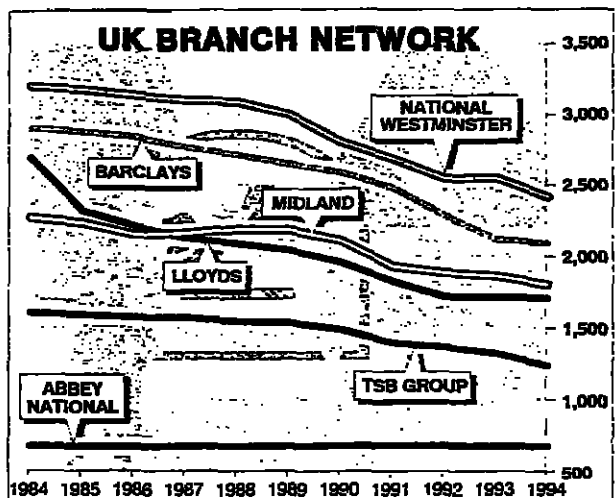
2040. "We've virtually reached the end of our programme," said Barclays. "Where we do make closures, it's always after considerable consideration. They're usually sub-branches in suburbia that weren't open for the full day, that weren't being used enough to justify them staying open."

Barclays added: "The key thing is we offer services where it's most convenient for the majority of customers. Where they live isn't always the most convenient place if the shopping centre has moved down the road."

Where Barclays closes a branch, it is normally replaced with an automated teller machine. "We're aware of the concern in rural communities where branches have been closed, but it's for us to educate customers and to make them more aware of alternative services available," it said.

There are currently 2,300 branches of NatWest across the UK, giving it the second-largest market after Lloyds-TSB. NatWest, the first bank to remain open on a Sunday at a shopping centre in Essex, said: "Our branch network is smaller than it was five years ago. We have to make a decision from time to time, and a balance has to be struck."

Midland describes itself as "peculiar", because of its commitment to "community banking". Last year, Midland cut 1,745 jobs and moved its senior managers into high street branches. Midland said: "Our current strategy is to provide a senior level of service at community level. Our customers want someone in their own community who can make a decision, without going to area or regional level."



merger, we hadn't had a large-scale closure for a year or two, and where we wanted to be. The merger has clouded the issue a little bit."

Appropriately, Lloyds is strongest in the South and South West, while TSB is traditionally a northern bank. "We look to see if there are enough customers using the branch, and that it isn't losing

people closing a small rural branch. It's bad news for people in the village, and for local business. It's a chicken and egg situation — maybe people in the village aren't using the bank enough. It's a thorny question what moral obligations banks have."

More than 500 branches of Barclays Bank have closed since 1990, leaving about



Left in the wilderness by NatWest

FREDERICK LOCK, above, had been banking with NatWest for 45 years when they decided to shut his local sub-branch in South Ockenden, Essex. As a 65-year-old pensioner, upset by the way his bank has treated him, Mr Lock is switching his account to another bank, (Morag Preston writes).

A couple of years ago, NatWest wrote to Mr Lock to inform him that his branch was being renamed as part of a consolidation programme. Last month, NatWest phoned him to ask whether he wanted to renew his Tessa.

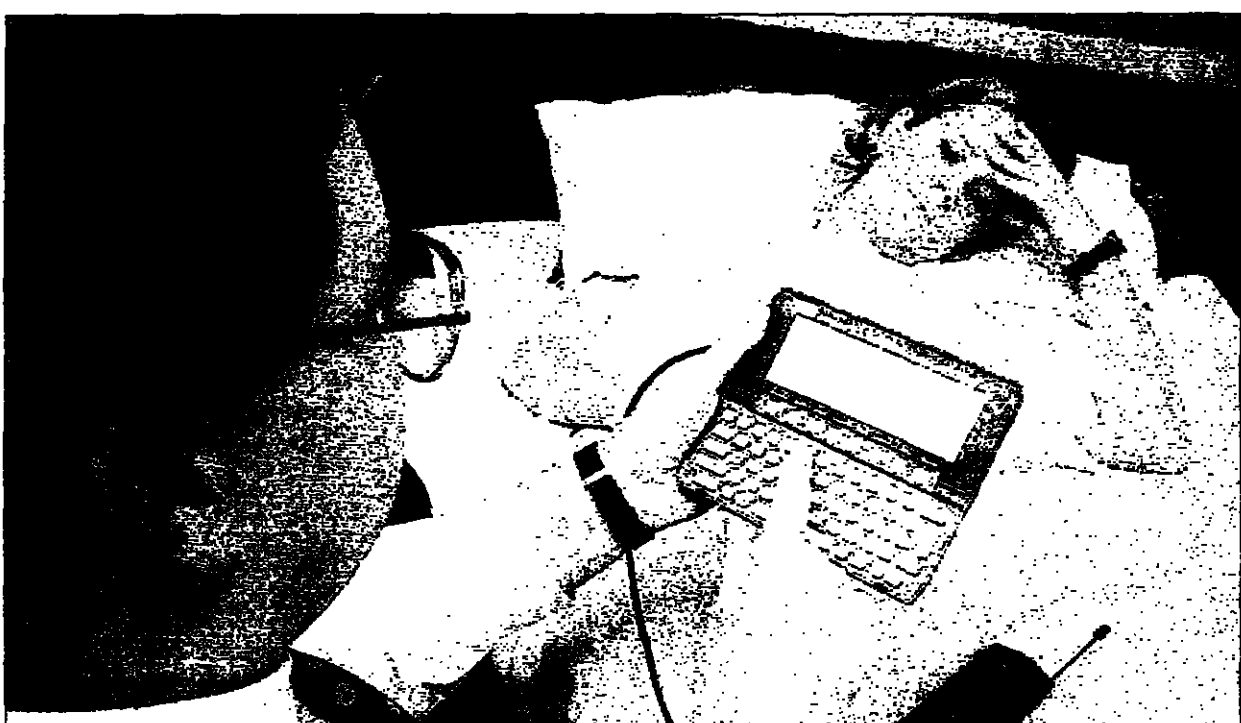
The following week, his sister-in-law went to open a new account and was assured that NatWest in South Ockenden had renewed its lease for a further five years. The week after that, Mr Lock's wife returned from

their bank with news that it is closing in March. "The nearest branch is in Grays, five miles away, and the journey will cost £2.10 by bus," says Mr Lock. "It will take half a day to get there and back, then I'll need a cup of tea when I get into town. Everyone we know is old — they can't stand outside waiting for a bus in this weather, and in the summer it's too hot. "Services" are being

chipped away. They are grasping my money with one hand, and they are locking the key of our bank door with the other."

The Post Office is the only remaining financial institution in South Ockenden, so wherever he moves his bank account, Mr Lock will be forced to travel into Grays. "Rates are important, but we'll pick the bank closest to the bus stop," he says.

Accounts in the palms of their hands



Bedside banking: with a Psion 3a computer and a mobile phone, even hospital patients can keep an eye on their bank balance

LLOYDS and Citibank have launched software packages for use with a Psion, the hand-held computer (Caroline Merrell and Morag Preston write).

The software will give the banks' customers access to the latest information on their accounts and allow transactions to be carried out via telephone lines.

The Citibank software allows customers to transfer money between accounts and gives details of transactions. The Lloyds

software enables customers to send electronic cheques to any UK account.

The Lloyds scheme began as a pilot in the Thames Valley and Eastern area, and involved 30 people. This has now been extended nationwide and abroad, involving another 70 customers, John Leather, product manager emerging technology, said: "Small businesses like the portability and security. Other people like the idea of being able to carry out home

banking whenever they want. But I think chequebooks are going to be here for a long time yet. It's not for wandering into the local shop with."

Mike Denney, Citibank marketing director, said: "No matter where customers are, they can access their account easily and with complete security." The Citibank software costs £49 including VAT. No price has yet been set for the Lloyds package.

Could the shape of things to come be a bank without branches? In just four years, as many as 10 million people could be conducting their financial affairs over the telephone, according to forecasts.

Datamonitor, the market research company, believes telephone banking is so popular with young people that it will grow by up to 30 per cent by the year 2000.

Well-heeled and clutching a brace of credit cards, the typical customer is a male homeowner, aged between 24 and 54. He earns at least £20,000 a year, and there is only a one-in-ten chance he is over 50. Telephone banking is designed for people who prefer to sort out their financial affairs in the evenings or at weekends.

The banks like it because once they have invested in the necessary technology, the service is relatively cheap to run. At present, more than two million banking transactions are made by telephone, with the number expected to rise to 9.6 million in four years. At the same time, traditional high street banking transactions are expected to fall from just under 30 million to around 22.4 million.

The Banking, Insurance and Finance Union (Bifu) says that as centralised telephone services grow, smaller high street branches will close down. It says 20,000 more banking jobs are expected to disappear within the next few years, and says that the industry, which employed 445,000

Battle lines are drawn as banks ring changes with telephone service



On call: not even a war stops a determined telephonist

people in 1989, now has jobs for only 370,000.

As demand grows, a two-tier system has developed. There is the personalised service, which allows you to call up an operator 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to pay bills, arrange overdrafts and check balances by phone.

National Westminster Bank and First Direct run such services. NatWest's is called PrimeLine. It has 20,000 customers and went nationwide last month. It is open only to people who earn more than £20,000 a year, and charges are the same as for ordinary NatWest services. First Direct,

launched by Midland Bank in 1989, has around 500,000 customers, who make half of their calls outside office hours.

The other option is the "keypad" service, by which all transactions are controlled by pressing the numbers on a telephone keypad. This is a very basic operation and you do not speak to anyone in the process. NatWest's ActionLine, launched in December 1989, is a 24-hour keypad operation.

However, the major player in the telephone banking industry is the Co-Operative Bank, which claims to have 750,000 customers and takes about six million calls every year. It has just opened a telephone centre in Skelmersdale, Lancashire, to complement its existing operation in Stockport, Cheshire.

"By 2000 we expect to be receiving 12 million calls a week, based on the fact that our customers are increasing by 1,000 a week," says Terry Thomas, the Co-Op's managing director. "Telephone banking is the face of the future, and it is here to stay."

Other players in the market include Abbey National, which has set up a telephone service open to any of its 1.6 million customers. Barclaycard, meanwhile, is open every day of the year between 7am and 11pm on weekdays and 9am to 5pm at weekends. More than 500,000 people have signed up for Direct Banking, the Royal Bank of Scotland's telephone service.

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Lilley back on the lower slopes again

As those visiting the Tate Gallery show can attest, Cézanne constantly depicted a Provencal beauty spot, the Mont Sainte-Victoire. Rarely happy with his efforts, the painter would return to the scene, again and again, to make one more attempt to get it right.

A mile away from the Tate, at the Department of Social Security in Whitehall, ministers have a mountain they wish to tackle, in the shape of the pension problem.

They are eager to ensure that the nation saves for its retirement, an entirely laudable aim. But, like Cézanne, their efforts have not always matched their aspirations. Sometimes, the results have been disastrous.

The £4 billion personal

pension scandal is a case in point. Responsible for this debacle were the life insurance companies who encouraged employees to leave company schemes for personal pensions with inferior benefits.

In an earlier government pensions initiative, five million employees, encouraged by National Insurance rebates, left the state earnings related pension scheme (Serps), also for personal pensions.

Unfortunately, about 50 per cent are making no contributions of their own. The NI rebates, meanwhile, are being eaten away by life insurers' charges.

The latest pensions big idea, as outlined this week in a speech by Peter Lilley,



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

Secretary of State for Social Security, shows that the Government continues to believe that life companies know how to behave honourably. This is in spite of the continuing delays in payment of compensation to the victims of their past misdeeds.

In Mr Lilley's vision, group personal pensions would cover workers at smaller companies, giving each employee

his own personal, portable fund. In his speech, however, Mr Lilley made no mention of how such pensions would be managed and invested, leaving open another glorious selling opportunity for the life industry.

The sales talk of its representatives would drown out the voices pointing out that group personal pension schemes can be operated

cheaply and efficiently. Watson Wyatt, the actuary, for example, suggests that the cash could be invested in low cost index-tracker funds.

Mr Lilley is right to concern himself with the pensions cause. But, unlike Cézanne, he should not always find himself having to return to the same task. This time he should ensure that his idea is executed properly.

DIY taxmen

Nine million over-worked taxpayers will soon be spending even less time with their families. They will be toiling unpaid for the Inland Revenue, filling in the new self-assessment tax returns, which run from 62 to 130

pages. If they were to charge the Revenue for their labour, the total bill would amount to £1 billion a year, according to Martin Benson of Coopers & Lybrand, the accountant.

Under the self-assessment reforms due to take effect in April, higher-rate taxpayers and the self-employed will be required to calculate their own tax liability. The Revenue will, if necessary, calculate the final figure. But the responsibility for understanding the forms and the law will still lie with the unfortunate taxpayer. This crucial point is not made clear in the Revenue's inane self-assessment promotional campaign.

The whole scheme may be a money-saver for the Revenue but is a serious threat to the enterprise culture.

Handouts all round in bid to gain loyalty

The Britannia has finally revealed details of its cash payment loyalty scheme for members, nearly eight months after first suggesting the plan. Qualifying members can expect to receive £10 to £300 a year, starting in 1997.

After speculating about what they would receive from the scheme, which was shrouded in secrecy for many months, members are unlikely to be ecstatic about the Britannia's predictions of average £40 payments in the first year.

In the wake of the recent wave of mergers and conversions in the industry, and the large one-off payments received by hundreds of thousands of building society members, those societies intent on maintaining their mutuality have been forced to pass part of their profits on to members. Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS, believes societies could part with two-thirds of their profits without harming their business.

The Britannia is the first society to announce a cash-based plan. To compete with the societies that are rewarding customers with reduced mortgage rates, the Britannia is cutting its variable rate by 0.25 percentage points for anyone who has held a mortgage for five years or more. The discount will start on April 1.

The society is using a points method to calculate how much members will get. To earn points, borrowers must make monthly residential mortgage payments of at least £50; savers must have at least £500 in a Britannia investment account. Savers and borrowers must also have been members of the society for at least one year.

Savers will get one point per

Karen Zagor on the rewards for staying at one society

£100 invested, to a maximum of £20,000. Borrowers will get one point per £1 paid each month, to a maximum of £500. PEP, pension and general insurance customers will receive a flat 50 points. Members will get at least £10 and no more than £300. Deposit and current account holders will get nothing. Members who joined after December 31 last year will not qualify for a bonus in the first year of the scheme.

Members will also be rewarded for longevity. Those of five to nine years standing will have their points multiplied by 1.5; from the tenth year, points will be doubled.

Points start accruing this year and the first payments will be in early 1997. The amount to be distributed will depend on the society's profits. The Britannia will announce a value per point at the end of each year.

The National & Provincial was the first to announce a membership loyalty scheme, shortly before the society was snapped up by the Abbey National bank.

In November, the Yorkshire said it would lift its minimum savings rate from 0.7 per cent to 2.75 per cent. Its mortgage rate was first cut from 7.99 per cent to 7.84, and then to 7.39 per cent. The Yorkshire also updated the rates on its obsolete accounts. In the same

month, Northern Rock cut 0.25 percentage points from its variable lending rate to apply after seven years. It also consolidated savings accounts, eliminating obsolete accounts. A second phase of benefits will be introduced in April.

Bradford & Bingley followed in January with plans to cut standard variable rates by 0.25 percentage points to 7.24 per cent from March 1. The gap between saving and borrowing rates will narrow, with savers receiving, on average, rates that are 0.25 percentage points better than those of competitors.

The Nationwide has said it will unveil its plans to reward long-term savers and borrowers in April.

The Skipton has not announced a loyalty incentive scheme as such. Instead, it is narrowing the gap between the interest rates for savers and borrowers. It has also brought in free unemployment insurance for all borrowers.

Mr Thomas of UBS believes that every society except the Birmingham Midshires will come out with some form of reward scheme. "I expect the Nationwide will opt for a scheme which reduces mortgage rates. If there's one thing that will hurt the plan hard it is a cut in mortgage rates because that is very hard to compete with," he said.

In one of the more peculiar moves, Alliance & Leicester, which is in the throes of converting to a bank, has said it will announce a scheme to reward long-standing customers at the end of March. Details are not yet available but borrowers will be among those who benefit.

Britannia helpline 0990 168516.



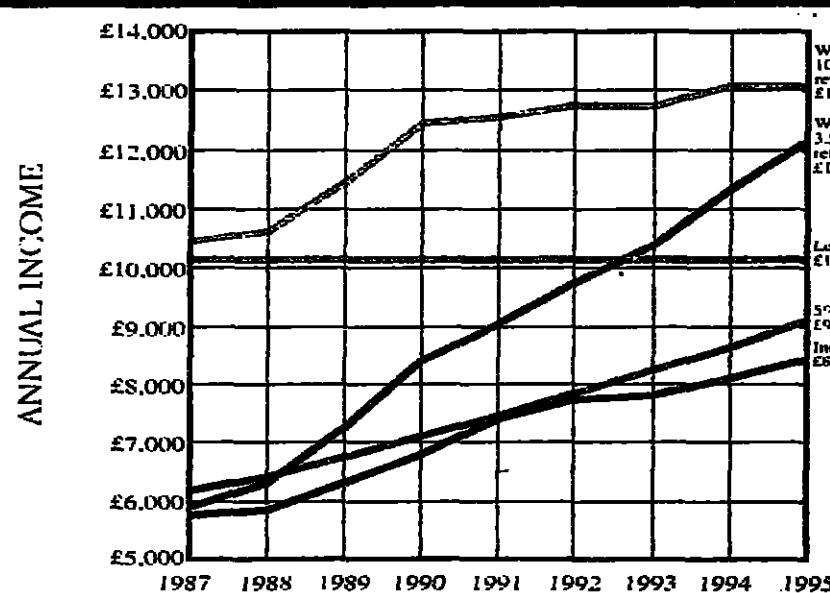
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FT Quarterly Review of Personal Finance
27 - 28 January 1995

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The above graph is designed to show what happened to four identical people and how different their outcomes have become. The graph is not designed to favour one route over another - everybody's personal circumstances are different - that's why you should seek advice about the most

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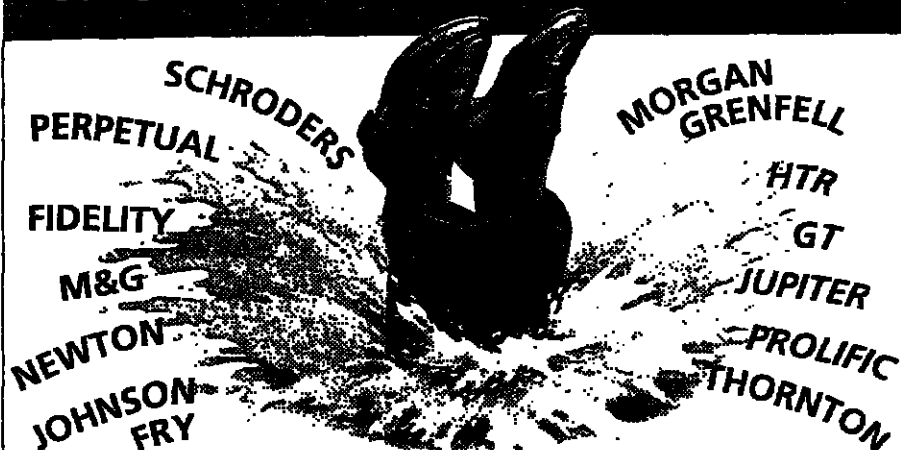
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Karen Zagor on computer services available to the private investor at home



Cast your Net to play the markets

Not long ago, real-time stock information and company news were the domain of stockbrokers and rich individuals who could afford a Reuters or Bloomberg terminal. Then came the Internet. Now, anyone with a computer and a modem should be able to get all the information they need to trade from home. However, the UK lags the US in information available electronically to private investors.

Investors interested in US stocks or bonds have access to a wealth of information, with real-time quotes at sites on the World Wide Web, including

InterQuote (<http://www.interquote.com>), which charges a monthly subscription. If a 15-minute delay is acceptable, most online services, such as CompuServe and America On Line, offer quotes for free. A subscription to Zacks Analyst Watch brings analysts' earnings predictions, daily news stories and price updates on companies in a portfolio. Zacks has its own Web site (<http://aw.zacks.com>) or can be reached via Quote.Com (<http://www.quote.com>), while Value Line's quarterly analysts' reports are available through CompuServe.

Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com>) offers news from Reuters, and there is special software to help with technical analysis, such as MarketArt's Windows on Wall Street and Equis International's MetaStock. Most of these sources are available to UK investors interested in the US, but information on UK markets is harder to find. If there are Web sites dedicated to UK equities, they are too obscure for the ordinary computer buff to find. On the software front, Windowline, the retailer, says there is "nothing available off the shelf" to aid analysis.

The conditions for UK investors, however, are not as bleak as they might seem. ESI Service is linked to ShareLink's MarketMaster service. Investors can buy and sell shares, gilts and unit trusts electronically once they have set up a ShareLink MarketMaster account. Shares are bought and sold electronically, using a PIN number to verify the deal. Payment is by cheque or card. The phone by debit card. Emma Kane, of ShareLink, says: "No money goes on to the Net and the PIN makes the service totally secure."

MetaStock (01707 644874), Indexia and Synergy (01582 424282) software can now be ordered by telephone. A feed service, such as that offered by New Prestel (0171 591-9000), can pipe up-to-date equity and gilt prices into your pc, to be used with the software. Prestel's CitiFeed daily price service is free, while its CitiService Premium real-time prices service costs £299.99 plus VAT a year.

EST (<http://www.esi.co.uk>) also has a real-time share price service for £19.90 a month, plus VAT. Its less expensive option gives eight updates a day of the FT-SE 100 index and 300 individual stocks. Charges are £100 to join and £10 plus VAT a month. It also offers price histories and comparisons and a tool that automatically revalues your portfolio as prices move.

ShareLink's MarketMaster service. Investors can buy and sell shares, gilts and unit trusts electronically once they have set up a ShareLink MarketMaster account. Shares are bought and sold electronically, using a PIN number to verify the deal. Payment is by cheque or card. The phone by debit card. Emma Kane, of ShareLink, says: "No money goes on to the Net and the PIN makes the service totally secure."

ShareLink (0121-200 7790). CompuServe offers a number of facilities including newswires and a clippings service that investors can customise to pull out stories from various sources. Users can get financial newsletters, investment and analysts' reports online. They also have Internet access.

CompuServe does have a stock quote service, but at present, prices are 24 hours old. Jodi Turner, CompuServe content development group manager, says: "In the US, you can get real-time quotes on CompuServe for the whole market. In Germany it's a 13-hour delay. CompuServe does not know when it will have more up-to-date share prices for UK subscribers, but expects to offer 24-hour share dealing by the second quarter of this year."

Trevor Neil, who runs the UK MetaStock User Group (01892 863476), says: "Things are just starting to change in the UK. Until the end of last year, you had to pay quite a lot for data. Now prices are starting to come down." The strict UK regulatory environment is one reason there is less accessible information here than in the US. CompuServe's Ms Turner says: "Before we launch any

new products, we need to make sure they comply with regulations. Rules in the US are less stringent about what is a financial advertisement."

In contrast, the US regulators are now online. The Securities and Exchange Commission, the financial watchdog, has its own Web site (<http://www.sec.gov>) which offers daily newsletters, speeches, annual reports, proxy registration statements and tender offer filings.

Investment houses, however, are not exactly leaping at the opportunity to disseminate research through the Net. One of the bigger houses said: "We have been looking at a number of ways of spreading information on the Net, but people feel that if everyone can get it electronically then why should our customers pay?"

This may be why Barclays Stockbrokers (<http://www.barclays.co.uk>) offers a good range of general information on different financial vehicles on its Internet site, but gives stock opinions only on its phone service.

Philip Bungey of Barclays Stockbrokers says: "Security is still our greatest fear. But we are looking very seriously at what to do with the Net in the future. We want to give investors enough information to make the right decisions."

The Times is on line at <http://www.the-times.co.uk>. Europay International, the payment product provider, has a new Internet page giving details on language, currency and cash machines, including whether the national airport has one (<http://www.europay.com>).

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Getting started: You do not need much more than a standard personal computer and a modem to get on to the Internet.

Modem: A modem is a device that lets your computer hook into the phone system, using an ordinary phone line. These days, most PCs have built-in modems. If you have to buy your own, look for one with speed. The faster the modem can transmit data down the line to your PC, the lower your phone bill. Modem speed is measured in bits per second. Look for a baud, or bps, rate of at least 14,400.

Access: There are two ways on to the Net. The easiest is to subscribe to an online information service, which will have its own electronic information sources, as well as providing access to the Net. If you are computer illiterate, seek a provider with good customer

support. Outfits such as CompuServe, are designed for techno-phobes and will essentially hold your hand as you negotiate the information highway.

Remember that you pay for every phone call that gets you online, so make sure there is a local access number, or your phone bills will leap. Subscription costs are coming down as competition increases, but the charging structure varies enormously between different providers. Among the better online servers are UK Online, Pipex and CompuServe. America On-Line is coming to Britain later this year.

If you are reasonably computer-literate, you can invest in web-browsing software and hook up through one of the direct Net servers, such as Demon. You will not get any of the little extras to make your electronic life more comfortable, but you will pay far less. This is the best option for anyone planning to spend hours on end surfing the Net. All

access providers will give you the basics: an electronic identification, a password and mail box (for e-mail).

Software: To surf the Net without a doctored in computer sciences, you need special software. Netscape has dominated the field with its Navigator software, but Microsoft is challenging with Internet Explorer. Both are very easy to use. If you belong to CompuServe or other online groups, you may be able to download the software directly.

Gossip: You no longer have to be on the trading floor to pick up market gossip. Many online servers have their own discussion forums for investors, or you can join discussions on the Net. These include misc.invest, misc.invest.stocks, misc.invest.funds, and misc.invest.technical.

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Caroline Merrell examines the implications for shareholders of the British Gas demerger

Small investors face some big decisions

As poor Sid, British Gas, the company which once welcomed the archetypal small shareholder with open arms, has now turned distinctly chilly.

When Richard Giordano, the chairman of British Gas, unveiled the company's plans to split up into two constituent parts — British Gas Energy and Transco International — he also announced that it would be inappropriate for the demerged, smaller gas supply company to have a share register of 1.8 million names.

Private shareholders now hold about 15 per cent of the shares in British Gas, down from the 62 per cent peak when the company was privatised in 1986. Many investors have sold their gas shares on the back of the company's dismal performance — the shares have fallen from more than 300p a year ago to their current price of about 243p.

Mr Giordano intends to shrink the BGE share register by making it easy for Sid to sell. One option being considered by British Gas is to allow private shareholders to sell their new, free shares in BGE on a no-fee basis or with a very low commission. The company broker would then sell the shares to institutional investors.

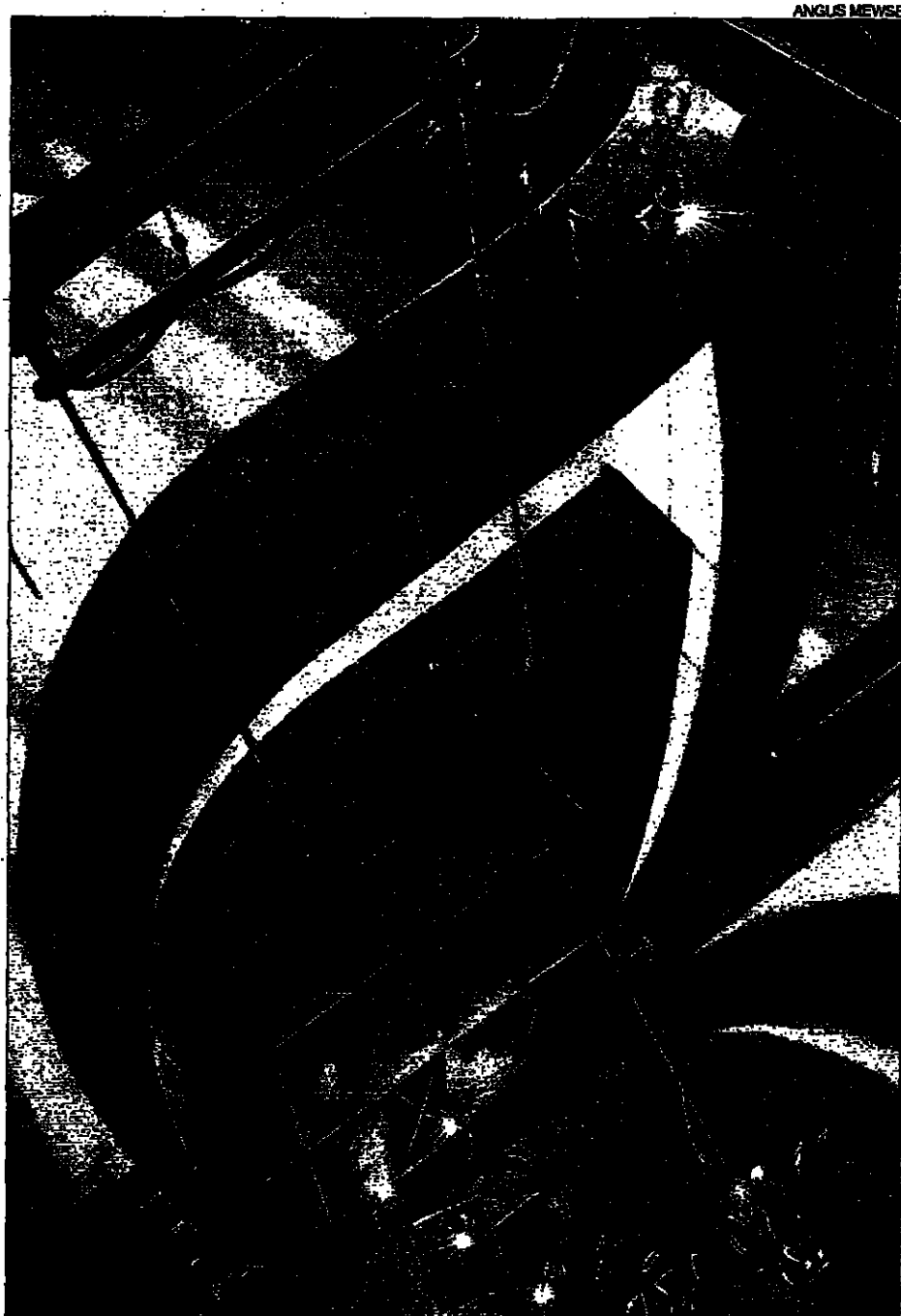
British Gas is not the only company to have recently announced plans to demerge. Hanson, another favourite with the small shareholder because of its high yield, is also planning to split into four companies by the end of this year.

The companies will comprise Hanson's energy interests, its tobacco company, Imperial Tobacco, its chemical division and its building materials interests.

Many analysts believe that the trend for conglomerates to demerge will continue. Others that could follow are BTR and BAT.

For private investors and their stockbrokers, though, demergers are something of a nightmare, especially if the shares are held through a single company Pep.

Here, Weekend Money answers some of the questions about what action private investors should consider if a company in which they hold shares announces plans to demerge.



Q What do stockbrokers advise small shareholders to do about demerged shares?

A Your broker may advise you to sell off one holding and increase the shareholding in the remaining company. Which shares to sell and which to keep depends on your view of how the demerged companies are going to perform.

Q Is it necessary to sell the shares, as Mr Giordano is suggesting small shareholders should do?

A No. When a company is demerged, private investors are simply issued shares in the unbundled companies. Hanson shareholders, for instance, will be allocated four sets of shares in four different companies, rather than just holding Hanson shares. British Gas shareholders will hold shares in Transco and BGE. It is not necessary to sell either holding.

Q What are the problems for small shareholders with demerged companies?

A If you are a small investor with, for example, a £1,000 holding of Hanson shares, after the demerger you will end up holding shares in four companies worth £1,000 in total. Dealing in shareholdings of this size can prove very expensive. Increasing the number of companies also increases the number of dividends which need to be collected. Some stockbrokers charge a dividend collection fee, and quadrupling the number of companies increases the costs considerably.

Q What happens if the original share is held in a single company Pep?

A It is impossible to hold the shares of more than one company in a single

company Pep, which means that investors must decide which share to allocate to their Pep before the demerger goes ahead.

The shares that are "dematerialised" from the Pep become liable for capital gains tax and for income tax from the moment of demerger.

The choice of share to keep in the Pep depends on how the different companies are expected to perform after demerger. It may be worth keeping a high dividend-paying share in favour of one which has potential for capital growth because individuals can make £6,000 a year in capital gains free of tax.

Anyone who holds a single company Pep in Hanson shares may be limited on which of the companies' shares they can hold in a Pep after the demerger. At least one of the companies, possibly two, are going to be American and, therefore, outside the rules on single company Peps.

Q Is it necessary to take any action now?

A Brokers say that private investors should hold on to their shares and see what happens. In the case of Hanson, other companies have already been reported to be interested in taking over parts of the demerged conglomerate, an action which would considerably boost the share price.

Break-up sparked by contract losses

THE splitting in two of British Gas is an attempt to resolve the problem of a huge liability facing the group in the shape of the loss-making take-or-pay contracts with North Sea gas producers. These were entered into by British Gas in the late Eighties and early Nineties, when it still had a monopoly.

As the gas market began to be opened up to competition, under the influence of Sir James McKinnon of Ofgas, the gas regulator, BGE lost market share and was left with more gas than it could sell — unwanted, expensive fuel for which it must pay. The average contract price is around 20p per therm. The current spot price is around 10p.

British Gas aims to ring-fence these contracts within the first of two new

companies, British Gas Energy. This business will assume liability for the contracts and for any provisions arising from their renegotiation. BGE will also be charged with the supply of gas to homes and businesses.

As a consolation prize, it will be given the £2.5 billion of assets of the Morecambe gasfield in the Irish Sea. Morecambe is capable of providing no less than 15 per cent of peak daily gas demand.

The second company, Transco International, will take on British Gas's debt but will have assets of about £15 billion, against about £2.6 billion for BGE. Transco will have responsibility for exploration and for the gas pipeline network.

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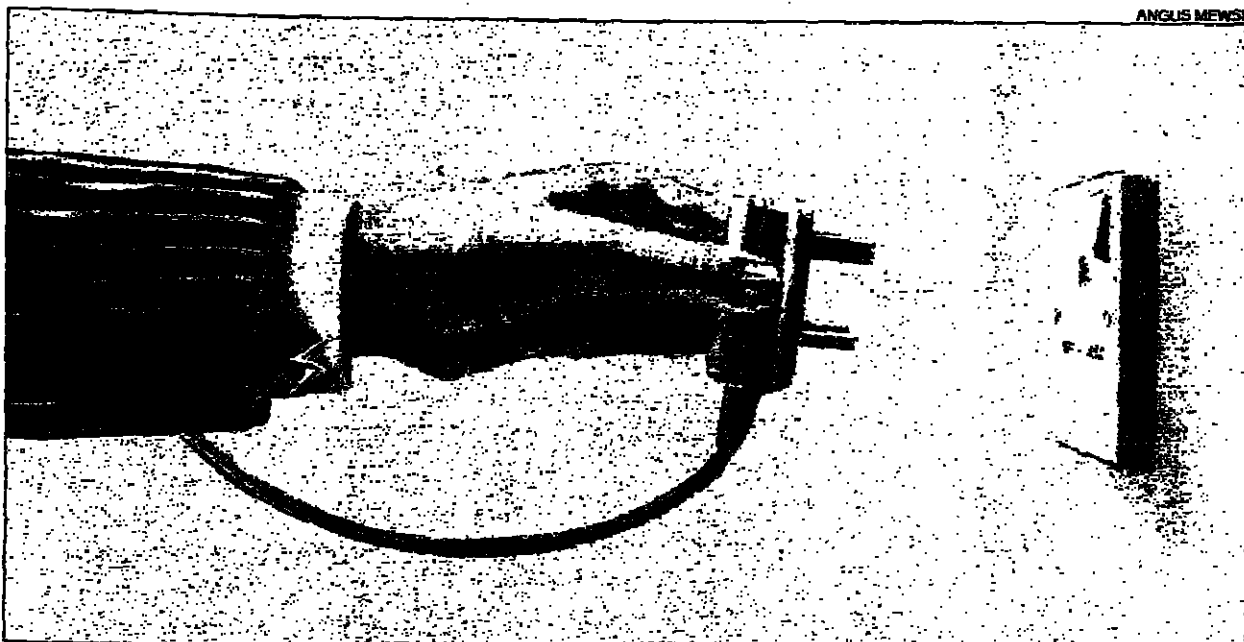
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On the trail of the shrinking Grid

Karen Zagor cuts through the confusion over trading in shares of the National Grid

Although shares in the National Grid have been trading for nearly two months, confusion is rife among the shareholders of regional electricity companies (Recs) who received Grid shares as part of the flotation.

Until December, the Grid was owned by the 12 Recs, which had been privatised in 1990. As part of the divestment process, eight Recs have distributed new Grid shares to existing shareholders.

Unfortunately for private shareholders, the distribution was not a simple process: each Rec distributed a different proportion of Grid shares and the sector was hit by a flurry of takeovers at the time of the Grid flotation. At the same time, several Recs consolidated their shares or announced stock splits, further muddying the waters for shareholders trying to measure their holdings. As Shiraz Allidina, UBS utilities analyst, said: "One hundred shares then would not be 100 shares now."

Unfortunately, companies do not always explain their manoeuvres to shareholders. Francis Cummings, a reader from Basingstoke, received little enlightenment from Southern Electric when he rang its helpline. "The share helpline number was 'unobtainable'," he said. "I was particularly

interested in why my shares had fallen from 150 to 139. I feel that I've lost a valuable asset."

In theory, shareholders should not have lost out. London Electricity, which paid shareholders a special dividend when it consolidated its shares on January 17, said: "The combination of the dividend and new shares should be equivalent to a shareholder's old stake, but obviously that fluctuates because the price of shares fluctuates."

So what should you be left with if you were a Rec shareholder with 100 shares at the time of the Grid flotation?

EAST MIDLANDS Shareholders should have received 71.3 Grid shares for every 100 old Midlands share held at the time of flotation.

LONDON Shareholders should have received 85.28 Grid shares for every 100 old London Electricity shares. Their London Electricity stake will also have changed. Investors with 100 old shares should have had a special dividend payment of £100 (£1 per share) plus 85 new London Electricity shares (six new for seven old).

MIDLANDS Shareholders should have 80.9

Grid shares for every 100 shares held in December. The company has since had a 2-for-1 stock split, so holders of 100 old Midlands shares should have 200 new shares.

NORTHERN Shareholders should have received 107 Grid shares for every 100 Northern shares.

SEEBOARD Shareholders should have had 48 Grid shares for every 100 Seeboard shares.

SOUTHERN Shareholders should have had 66 Grid shares for every 100 old Southern shares. The distribution was made in January. After consolidation, they should have received £50 for every 100 old Southern shares (£50 per share). They should now hold 93 new shares for every 100 old.

SOUTH WALES Shareholders should have 91.28 Grid shares for every 100 shares held in December.

YORKSHIRE Shareholders should have 75.66 Grid shares for every 100 old Yorkshire shares. After consolidation, shareholders should have received £100 in special dividend payments for every 100 old Yorkshire shares

(£1 per share) and should now hold 83 new Yorkshire shares (five new for six old).

NON-DISTRIBUTORS Norweb, Manweb, Eastern and South Western have not distributed their Grid holdings to shareholders.

CONSOLIDATION Norweb has been taken over by North West Water. Eastern was acquired by Hanson, Manweb was taken over by Scottish Power. Swalec by Welsh Water. South Western by Southern of the US and Seeboard by Central and South West. PowerGen's bid for Midlands Electricity and National Power's for Southern Electricity are being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

NATIONAL GRID National Grid shares opened at 205p per share on December 11. At mid-session yesterday they were 194½p.

TAX Grid shares issued to Rec shareholders are treated as dividends for tax purposes. Basic-rate taxpayers will already have had the new 20 per cent savings tax taken directly from their shares. Higher-rate taxpayers owe the Revenue 20 per cent.

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Merger fever sweeps life offices

Marianne Curphey seeks the next likely windfall

Merger and flotation fever, which has changed for ever the way people view the humble building society account, is now sweeping through UK life offices.

Just as millions of hopefuls put £100 in a share account in each of the larger building societies, anticipating a payout of cash or shares when they merged or became plc's instead of being mutuals owned by their members, so sophisticated investors are now looking to the life offices.

At stake are the potential sweeteners which policyholders could be paid if and when mutuals change status. So great is the perceived interest in stocking up on second-hand life and endowment policies that a new investment trust is being launched next week to invest exclusively in such products.

Run by Scottish Value Managers — the Edinburgh investment company in partnership with Beale Dobie, traders in second-hand life and endowment policies — the Life Offices Opportunity Trust is being



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marketed mainly to institutional investors. Its shares will be available to private individuals via brokers.

Colin McLean, managing director of Scottish Value Managers, said the trust places an emphasis on policies in companies "which could benefit from restructuring". He added: "This does not just mean demutualising, which

might involve the company paying out special bonuses, but also the flotation of investment arms or cost-cutting measures," he said. "Bonuses may be bigger or smaller than those which building societies have been paying out, but they are likely to be spread over a longer period. For example, a special final payment might be made

when the policy eventually matures."

Mr McLean says the trust is designed as a long-term investment, which is expected to make a return of 9-12 per cent.

One analyst gave warning, however, that investors should look carefully at the costs of the Life Offices Trust before buying in. "If you think a mutual is going to float, why

not just buy a second-hand policy yourself instead of paying an annual management charge?" he said. "Kleinwort Benson and BZW already run such trusts which have only just kept pace with the FTSE-100 index."

Meanwhile, Beale Dobie has seen a huge increase in demand for second-hand policies in mutuals ever since Norwich Union signalled it was interested in becoming a listed company.

Top of the shopping list is Clerical and Medical, the mutual life insurer which has invited bids from potential purchasers: Friends Provident, NPI and Scottish Provident. In addition, analysts say Scottish Life, Scottish Widows, Scottish Amicable and Standard Life all might change their status.

If a mutual converts or merges, will your life or endowment policy be safe? Mike Wadsworth, of the actuaries Watson Wyatt, believes it will.

"There may be a sweetener if the mutual converts, but I would not expect it to be more than a bonus of a few percentage points on the total fund return," he said. "Overall, costs are likely to be lower, and if the fund is part of a larger company it will be more financially secure."

However, he added that some companies may close an existing fund for new business, with little incentive to achieve outstanding performance.

Are you covered for the perfect replacement?

Once upon a time, cost was the principal factor in your choice of household and contents cover. Now the decision should also be governed by taste — do you like the goods offered by the retailer which will supply the replacements for your cherished valuables?

Norwich Union this week signed a contract linking itself with the Goldsmiths Group — a jewellery chain which already has a similar link with Direct Line. When Norwich Union policyholders lose, damage or have their jewellery or watches stolen, Goldsmiths — which describes itself as a catering for the "upper/middle market" — will replace the items.

It is claimed that everyone stands to benefit from the deal, including the

policyholder. The agreement is a valuable contract for Goldsmiths, a stock market-quoted company which now gains a steady stream of business. Even before the formal deal was struck, the chain was handling £56,000 worth of replacements for Norwich Union in a single month.

Norwich Union obtains a significant discount, keeping down its costs — a piece of news that should be welcome to potential shareholders. Norwich Union, currently a mutual business owned by its policyholders, has announced its intention to seek a stock market flotation next year.

The company said that its ability to negotiate a 20 per cent discount had prompted the move to link with Goldsmiths. Previously, local

branches had negotiated individual deals with jewellers in their neighbourhoods. The company felt that the Goldsmiths link would also provide a better service for policyholders, who would not need to provide invoices to make claims. In areas the appointed suppliers do not cover, Norwich Union will link-up with a local provider.

Norwich Union is also anxious to deter fraudulent claims, which usually involve a preference for cash rather than replacement. However, a company spokesman said that policyholders would not be forced to take Goldsmiths goods.

Other similar contracts are now planned, swelling the list of Norwich Union approved suppliers. Brown

and white goods are, for example, already replaced by Miller Brothers and ScottishPower, and DIY, garden and power tools by B&B Hickman. TFKingfisher handles household glass, and the RAC has the motor recovery contract.

This type of deal looks set to become more common. Connections, the direct insurance subsidiary of Sun Alliance, has informal links with, among others, the Signet jewellery chain, owner of H Samuel and Halfords (for bicycles).

Having seen their options restricted to allow their insurer to make savings, Norwich Union policyholders will expect to see premiums fall.

ANNE ASHWORTH

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

State pension can leave you with the birthday blues

From Mr I.M. Baird
Sir. You may have thought that all men who paid Class 1 National Insurance contributions during their working life qualified for a state pension on their 65th birthday. But you would have been mistaken.

Due to an unforeseen miscalculation by my late mother 65 years ago, my 65th birthday fell on Tuesday, January 9, 1996. This meant that my entitlement to a state pension did not begin until Monday, January 15, 1996. Apparently, the latest regulations say that unless your 65th birthday falls on a Monday the pension does not begin until the first Monday thereafter.

Is this due to government penny-pinching at the expense of pensioners, or has some mandarin in Whitehall declared it too inconvenient to press a few buttons on a computer to pay pensioners their rightful entitlement?

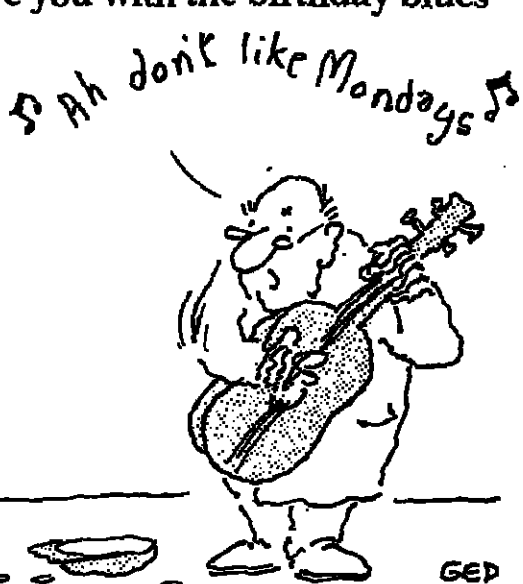
It is manifestly unjust that despite having paid the same

contributions, one man can lose almost a week's pension compared with others whose 65th birthday falls on a Monday. The same anomaly applies to women.

It is not hard to imagine the reaction of Parliament or fi-

nancial editors if private pension schemes adopted this swindle.

Yours sincerely,
IAN M. BAIRD,
6 Park Lane,
Haddington,
East Lothian.



WINNERS & LOSERS

Take more interest in card rules

WHEN Frank Jones received his Marks & Spencer chargecard statement, the interest charges stood out. A few days later with payment for his last statement of £14.32, he expected interest of no more than a few pence. Instead, he was asked to pay £5.32.

"I was being charged interest on all the purchases I had made over Christmas, even though the statement for those purchases is not due until the end of January," says Mr Jones, of Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire.

Della Critchley of M&S says: "Our booklet explaining the chargecard clearly states that interest will be charged daily on the outstanding balance. That includes any purchases appearing on the current statement where a balance is brought forward from the previous statement. But we try to be reasonable if a customer has made a mistake or not realised the rules."

Indeed, Mr Jones turned out to be a winner, because M&S accepts that it is the first time he has missed payment, and has dropped the interest.

The Credit Card Research Group says all credit cards work on the same principle as M&S. Most credit cards give you an interest-free period if you settle the balance on your statement in full. Save & Prosper and Royal Bank of Scotland have credit cards without an interest-free period, but they carry a low rate of interest.

SARAH JONES

It's not what you do, it's the way you do it

From Mr N. McDonald

Sir, Our post yesterday contained two letters from our two bankers, noting audit fee charges for necessary information requested by our accountants for our annual audit. Girobank very apologetically explained that they will have to charge £20 plus VAT, which will be taken along with next month's bank charges. National Westminster, stated on a standard form that they had debited our account with £32.31.

Yours sincerely,
NEIL McDONALD,
McDonald Fishselling Ltd,
7 Beeching Park Estate,
Wainwright Road,
Beckhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex.

Surprised by 'whingeing' society investors

From Mr D.N. Lincoln

Sir, I am a little surprised at the recent spate of letters from building society investors who claim to have received a raw deal because they will not qualify for merger or bank conversion bonuses.

As a self-confessed "carpet-bagger" who keeps abreast of the financial press, I cannot understand how any informed investor can knowingly reduce their balance to below £100 in the financial climate of the last 12 months and then complain that they expect perks or bonuses.

At the time of opening their building society account they

agreed to accept the variable rate of interest current at that particular time — and I know that in every case the society concerned has honoured that agreement. Conditions concerning merger bonuses, etc. never ever arose, and the old saying, "what you've never had, you'll never miss", springs to mind. I consider it little more than sour grapes that has occasioned this present bout of whingeing and thining.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK N. LINCOLN,
237 Victoria Drive,
Eastbourne,
East Sussex.

Large surplus is not mutually beneficial

From Mr A. Verdin

Sir, The creation of a substantial surplus in a mutual building society is a result of poor, rather than good, management.

Keeping expenses low is important, and a society has a duty to keep a prudent reserve, but the only way in which large surpluses can be built up is by borrowers paying too much and savers getting too small a return.

This at last seems to be recognised by the Bradford and Bingley, who will be returning some of this surplus to all participating members.

It is not at all clear that the larger societies have been right in the interests of their members. The achievement of a substantial surplus makes the society attractive to other financial institutions and gives added value to shares in a floated company. It can also buy the votes of sufficient members to achieve the board's aim.

While some may selectively reap considerable benefits from the change, it is clearly not in the long-term interest of all of a society's members, and even these benefits pale in comparison to those won by the key board

members. Nevertheless, if it is the will of the members to change, then the distribution must be fair. If necessary, the Building Societies Commission should be empowered to ensure this.

The fairest way would be for the society to pay out to both borrowers and investing members on a formula based on the product of duration and amount of investment or loan. This is a rough approximation of the contribution a member has made to that surplus, and it would avoid completely the necessity for artificial cut-off dates and exclusion of speculators.

Societies giving shares appear to be moving some way in this direction. The C&G offer was, of course, at the other end of the spectrum: as unfair as it was possible to be, excluding not only all borrowers but also many deserving long-term investors.

Needless to say, I shall move my own mortgage — as soon as I can without penalty — from the C&G to a sound mutual society, and I do not think I will be alone.

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY VERDIN,
Dry Leys, Frilford,
Oxfordshire.

CGT ALLOWANCES DECEMBER 1995

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in December 1995

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
January	-	0.824	0.735	0.652	0.566	0.507	0.458
February	-	0.816	0.728	0.639	0.550	0.501	0.453
March	0.897	0.813	0.723	0.624	0.558	0.498	0.448
April	0.860	0.788	0.700	0.590	0.543	0.480	0.424
May	0.848	0.781	0.694	0.583	0.540	0.479	0.419
June	0.841	0.776	0.689	0.579	0.541	0.479	0.414
July	0.841	0.767	0.681	0.582	0.545	0.480	0.412
August	0.840	0.759	0.676	0.578	0.541	0.478	0.397
September	0.841	0.751	0.672	0.579	0.533	0.472	0.390
October	0.832	0.745	0.662	0.571	0.531	0.465	0.378
November	0.823	0.738	0.657	0.571	0.518	0.457	0.370
December	0.826	0.734	0.658	0.569	0.513	0.459	0.365
1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	
January	0.358	0.261	0.157	0.111	0.083	0.067	0.032
February	0.348	0.254	0.151	0.106	0.086	0.061	0.028
March	0.342	0.241	0.147	0.102	0.082	0.058	0.022
April	0.318	0.205	0.132	0.088	0.072	0.045	0.011
May	0.310	0.194	0.129	0.082	0.068	0.041	0.007
June	0.306	0.188	0.124	0.082	0.069	0.041	0.008
July	0.305	0.188	0.126	0.086	0.071	0.047	0.011
August	0.301	0.176	0.124	0.086	0.067	0.041	0.005
September	0.292	0.166	0.120	0.081	0.062	0.039	0.001
October	0.283	0.157	0.115	0.077	0.063	0.038	0.006
November	0.272	0.159	0.111	0.079	0.064	0.037	0.008
December	0.269	0.160	0.111	0.083	0.062	0.032	-

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Jun	310
Jul	305
Aug	300
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Oct	285
Nov	235
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Feb	265

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Nat West Bank 0121 234 2000	2.49	£15k+	90	5.50% disc-12mth Var r-31.6.01

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Small gains in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	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Saturday portrait: Zola Pieterse, by Rob Hughes

Budd blossoms with rebirth of a career pursued by protest

Only a breakdown of the body, the runner's machine, or the cry of a baby will stop Zola Pieterse from taking a significant stride today towards a third Olympic Games appearance. She is scheduled to run in the cross-country trials for South Africa, intent on making the team for the world championships in Stellenbosch on March 23. After that, the Olympic trials in April and the decision of whether to go for the 5,000 or 10,000 metres in Atlanta this summer or, instead, come back for Sydney in the year 2000, when she will be 34.

The most reassuring surprise about Pieterse, the former Zola Budd, is the smile: it is mature, maternal, positive... far, far away from the 17-year-old who, under a flag of convenience, arrived in England from the apartheid-isolated South Africa a dozen years ago and, bewildered by the culture shock, peered through her glasses at the assembled press and anti-apartheid demonstrators, for all the world a cornered and frightened fawn.

One thing that Pieterse has never lost is the intensity, the inner motivation, anger even, that drove a tiny, barefoot girl into the consciousness of the world when, early in 1984, she became the fastest woman over 5,000 metres but could not have her time ratified as a world record because white South Africans were as much the victims of apartheid as black.

Now, there is a greater purpose to her life — Lisa, a daughter who was born in October. After the birth, and despite the fact that Mike Pieterse, her husband, had left the family home, Pieterse believes that she gained physical and mental strength.

"I can't explain the feeling," Pieterse said, "but I know that, if you believe in something as much as I believe that I can run as fast as I ever did, then that is half the battle. I started running a week after Lisa was born. I know that, if I don't over-train, if the muscles I don't rebel in any way, I have at least as much as there."

Yet, Lisa holds the key. That

serene child dictates at what hour, morning and afternoon, her mother will take her two-hour training run across the remote veldt around Bloemfontein, where Pieterse is in her element.

She found as a child that she had a lightness and a fleetness that could defeat the boys, never mind the girls, on the ten-acre home-stand. Those children were black as well as white, the offspring of the servants, and so, when Pieterse arrived in England, becoming instantly the symbol of violent anti-apartheid demonstration, the ignorance of people who ran her, literally, off the course was manifest. What they wanted her to say then and what she, an immature, solemn and withdrawn teenager could not articulate, was that there is no difference under the skin, no

"I didn't even know who Nelson Mandela was until I arrived in England"

cause that justifies racial inequality... but she can say it now.

She relishes the new South Africa and part of her desire is to get back on the rostrum, this time like Francois Pienaar, the rugby union captain, to be recognised by a whole nation. Yet if that baby should cry, if Lisa becomes unwell, she will not race. The priorities for the runner, as much as for any human being, change. Pieterse, herself, is the youngest of six children, but her birth almost killed her mother, who was given 13 pints of blood during the three-day struggle to produce the tiny, thin baby.

Imagine, then, the fear of Pieterse last year when her own pregnancy was diagnosed as problematical. She took six months off from running — the first time in her life that she had ever obeyed warnings that to run, even surreptitiously, defied nature's alarms.

"People caricatured my life as if I was someone born to run free," she said. "I can't honestly say that I ever ran for fun, without the goals. I don't think I would ever have run in the first place. I never knew the meaning of 'fun run'."

Now, though, there is a total change. "I don't have the time, because of Lisa, to think about my running," she said. "I don't philosophise any more. I guess what I'm saying is that, unless me and my husband work out our differences, Lisa is the only person in the world that I have responsibility for. The whole point of motherhood is that you love someone unconditionally."

At that moment, Pieterse became more introspective, talking about the anger that is exorcised in her competitive running. "When I run, it is the only time I think about things that happened, the only time I allow emotions from the past," she said.

The past is not just born out of the remoteness, the wild, of the isolated town of Bloemfontein. There, the girls wear flower dresses, the young congregated at cafes listening to Cliff Richard and Pat Boone. Unseen by the many, however, in a late-night bar, I witnessed one young Afrikaner sell another a handgun for 800 rand (about £130). They feel, the changing South Africa, the need for protection.

The next day, a month ago, Pieterse, with shoes, won a ten-kilometre race, coming in three minutes ahead of the field but two minutes slower than her best time of 32min 22sec. This, nevertheless, was remarkable timing, given that she had been back in serious preparation barely one month.

What pushes her? England does. The memory, the suppressed anger, of the people who manipulated her, including her late father, who lost his daughter's trust when he took most of the money that the Daily Mail provided to take her to England, to exclusively promote her career and to persuade the Government to push her ahead of the queue for British citizenship on the grounds that her grandfather had been a printer in Hackney.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN

"Yes, I was very naive of the ways of the world," she said. "In my running, I was very determined; I was a student at university, but my generation had no news from outside. I didn't even know who Nelson Mandela was until I arrived in England. That couldn't happen today because we can switch on Sky News, BBC News — and there will be no going back, no censorship for our children."

What, in retrospect, shocks and hurts is that nobody tried to explain to her what kind of a pawn she was perceived as. She felt — still feels — that she was a closed book to them and that any lingering ill feelings that she has about their behaviour is best channelled into her running.

Even today, I probably trust animals more than I do people," she said. Her two dogs travel in her off-road vehicle, together, of

course, with Lisa. She would trust, she said, her mother with money or anything else. Her father, if he were alive? No answer — Pieterse saying only through measured silence the pain of her inner motivation.

That pain has always been concentrated in the death of her sister, Jennifer, a nursing sister 11 years her senior, who died after an operation when Pieterse was 14. "That changed everything," she

said. "I changed my school, my coach. I started to run seriously, aggressively."

Motivation now is not anger and loneliness — Lisa ensures that — yet while there is, as yet, no sponsor, nobody to push or prod or even guide, there is a runner whose opponents believe will return at least as strong as before. The new Pieterse is ready for the new South Africa... if only baby Lisa will stay well and silent.

Hansen prepares to emerge from shadow of Edwards

By DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

SPECTATORS at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham today are advised to expect a British record in the triple jump, perhaps even a world record. They should not, however, expect to see Jonathan Edwards.

This time, the stage is set for Britain's other potential Olympic medal-winner in the discipline, Ashia Hansen takes on Inessa Kravets, the women's world record-holder, confident that her own British record will fall, while those in the camp of Iva Prandzheva, the world championship runner-up, have been asking what bonus will be paid if the world mark is beaten.

The trio is assembled for the British leg of the Ricoh Tour, the indoor equivalent of the Golden Four summer grand prix. The women's triple jump is one of six events chosen for the tour this winter and Hansen is ready for a share of the spotlight with the big names on view, such as Sally Gunnell, Sandra Farmer-Patrick, Maria Mutola and Moses Kiptanui.

Hansen has never beaten Kravets, who broke the record

at the world athletics championships in Gothenburg last summer, but is confident she can today. "She has got to the stage where she believes in herself," Frank Attoh, her coach, said.

Hansen's self-belief has been bolstered by three weeks in South Africa where she not only jumped to within two centimetres of her British outdoor record but also managed to wipe away some of the mystique surrounding her strongest competitors.

She watched Anna Biryukova, the European champion, in training. "Before, she was overawed by the name



Hansen: record attempt

Biryukova," Attoh said, "but she saw the kind of training she did and Ashia trains just as hard."

Hansen's sessions include two-footed bunny jumps over 3ft 6in hurdles; sets of six, several times over, designed to improve her rebound through each phase. "She trains almost like a man," Attoh said.

"My strength is my speed and I can hop a long way," Hansen said. The step was her weakness, but, after giving that phase attention in South Africa, "it has definitely come on". Her jumping has improved, too. In South Africa, Hansen beat her previous best long jump three times in one competition.

The outdoor world record is 15.50 metres, the indoor mark 15.03 metres. Hansen's outdoor British record is 14.66 metres, ranking her world No 7 in 1995; her indoor record is 14.29 metres. According to Attoh, 14.66 metres "could go this weekend".

Hansen has improved with every season since Attoh began coaching her three years ago and he expects that to continue. This year he wants 14.80 metres indoors and 15 metres outdoors, which would put her in contention

for a medal in the first Olympic women's triple jump.

"I am not thinking about the Olympics, even though I should be," Hansen said. She is preoccupied, for now, with winning a medal at the European indoor championships in Stockholm next month. None of the world top ten come from outside Europe, so a medal in Stockholm would underline her international credentials.

An Olympic medal, though, is a must for when she returns to South Africa. Coachloads of children from Soweto and Davidsonville chanted her name when they went to see her compete after she and Attoh had been into the townships to demonstrate jump techniques. She became an instant sporting heroine.

"It left me sad because they have no facilities and jump barefoot," Hansen said. "I will always be thinking about them. All they have got is a playing field and a cut-out pit filled with sawdust instead of sand."

Today, Hansen returns to the comfort of sand — "the sawdust was hard" — but she will not have the cheering to lift her. The competition should do it, though. Kravets and Prandzheva beware.

Persistent Andries makes his claim again

By SRIRUKMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

DENNIS ANDRIES continues to defy time. The former world light-heavyweight champion from Hackney is still trying to get back to the top and, at the age of 42, he is making a second attempt to lift the British cruiserweight championship. He meets Terry Dunstan, of Vauxhall, again, at the London Arena tonight.

When the two last met, many believed Andries won. The bout was a close one and Andries thought his greater aggression swung the contest his way. The decision still riddles. He dislikes Dunstan and refers to him as "a girl". They almost came to blows at a press conference recently.

While Andries, at times, looked tired and ring-worn in that bout in Glasgow last May and Dunstan, being 15 years younger, should have improved enough to win clearly this time, the old man's chances should not be ruled out. He is perhaps the fittest and toughest British boxer today and it should not surprise anyone if he outlasts the younger man.

So often in his career of 63 contests, he has proved the experts wrong. He was written off in 1978 when he was beaten by Bunny Johnson in a British light-heavyweight championship at Stoke, but Andries came back and lifted the title four years later and went on to win the European and world championships.

Dunstan is the hit-and-run type, the opposite of Andries, who does not like to take a backward step. Much will depend on who takes control first. If Andries manages to land a solid blow early, Dunstan could lose heart; after all, he has had only 11 contests against ordinary opposition, while Andries has met some of the toughest in the game, including Thomas Hearns and Jeff Harding. However, if Dunstan, who is 6ft 3in, can use his height advantage of four inches and speed to keep Andries off in the early rounds, he could frustrate the old man and cause him to lose concentration.

Some Olympic spirit is hard to swallow

As the Coca-Cola Olympics lurch toward us with ever increasing speed, it is time to ask ourselves the following question: what is it that truly embodies the Olympic spirit?

There can only be one answer, of course — an American bank. This is because a certain bank is giving away a million bucks. No, not to impoverished athletes from the Third World. Just to punters, as a promotion for... well, the bank.

NationsBank is the official bank of the 1996 Olympic Games and it is offering customers the chance to win a Southern Living Dream Home. It also offers 50 trips to the Games, ten cars — the Olympic Gold Regal from Buick, since you ask — and 100 IBM computers. The dream home will be built anywhere in the United States that the customer wants and the bank will contribute \$100,000 (about £65,000) towards land purchase and tax.

On behalf of the Atlanta committee for the Olympic Games, I congratulate NationsBank, Southern Living, Buick and IBM for working together to offer consumers these outstanding prizes. Billy Payne, president of the above committee, said: "Our sponsors have been working side by side with us to stage the 1996 Olympic Games. Many are also working together to benefit fans of the Olympic Games. They truly embody the Olympic spirit."

And there was this column thinking it was just a sleazy promotion. But then I'm very naive, you know.

Diego is not having the happiest of times as he plays for Boca Juniors. The other week, at the end of the match, he flung his shirt into a crowd: a generous donation of a precious souvenir from a great, great man. A fan caught it and chucked it straight back.

Take a break

Troly faithful readers of this column will recall the rugby league player Barry Ashall, who broke his leg playing for

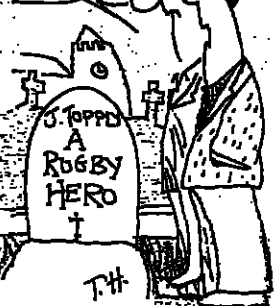


SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

Swinton against Keighley and played on. After that, he declared himself fit for the next game against Batley.

Well, Craig Randall, of Salford, has gone a bit further. He has been ruled out of tomorrow's match with Wigan after playing four games with a broken ankle. "I've been told I'll be

He died during a match but carried on playing.



out for six weeks," he said. "It's a blow, but at least the lads now know I wasn't faking injury."

Seattle rumbled

It is often supposed that the American sports industry is the most advanced in the world. Well, so it is, but advancement need not mean improvement. You don't often hear that, say, Manchester United are moving to Leeds in a fit of pique. Yet the Seattle Seahawks, whose home support was so frenzied it was known as "the twelfth man", have sneaked out of Seattle, performing nothing less than a moonlight flit. Their moving vans came in at dead of night to avoid any possible demonstration by supporters.

The reason they left? Well money, obviously, but the reason given was that their home, the Kingdome, re-

Caught short

Faithful readers of this column will recall the footballer of a couple of weeks back who scored eight goals and then had them all cancelled. The match was abandoned due to a shortage of players among the opposition.

Tony Booth, a referee from Middlesex, writes to tell me of a tie that was abandoned when Havant, 1-0 down against Basingstoke with four players sent off, lost another player through injury. This timely loss prompted the ref to call the game off.

The FA said later that the ref need not have abandoned the game. It is generally accepted that you need seven at the start. If you lose any more along the way, that's football, son.

Ancient values

High time we had a tale of Corinthian beauty in this space and so here is one, from Italy, no less. There was Gigi Casiraghi, the Italy and Lazio centre-forward, and there was Alberto Fontana, the goalie from Bari.

Fontana came haring out of his area to play the ball and the referee, Signor Bolini, was not impressed. He decided at once to send Fontana off for handball.

Casiraghi went to the ref and explained that the goalie had played the ball with his chest. The ref believed him and Fontana stayed on.

I suppose that Fontana should then have won the match by saving a Casiraghi penalty, but in fact, Lazio won 4-3. "I learnt my ancient values from my father," Casiraghi said.

50 José Carreras CDs to be won

PASSION IS the name of a new solo album by José Carreras which is taking the pop charts by storm. Now The Times, in association with Warner Classics, gives you the chance to win one of his recordings in our exclusive competition.

It was the Spanish tenor's dream to put together a personal selection of musical masterpieces with lyrics he would sing in many different languages to appeal to people all over the world. For his unique blend of well-known classical melodies, Carreras is accompanied by The Angel Orchestra of London and the English Concert Singers.

The 14 tracks are: *En Aranjuez Con Tu Amor*, Rodrigo; *My Own Little Miracle*, Borodin; *Tristesse*, Chopin; *Come Take My Heart*, Liszt; *Amore Perduto*, Albinoni; *If Tomorrow Comes*, Dvorak; *Paris Angelicus*, Franck; *Love is a Melody*, Mozart; *Dreaming of You*, Mascagni; *Close To Me*, Brahms; *I Remember You*, Beethoven; *Ave Maria*, Gounod; *Broke New World*, Dvorak; *A Place Far, Far Away*, traditional Kazakhstani folk song.

HOW TO ENTER

Simply call our competition hotline 0891 405001 with the answer to the following question.

What nationality is José Carreras? a) Italian b) Spanish c) Brazilian

The phonenumber will be open until midnight tonight. The 50 winners will be chosen at random from all correct entries received.

Calls are charged at 30p per minute (plus 4p per minute on all other debts).

jose carreras

JOANNA PITMAN MEETS JOSE CARRERAS.
SEE THE TIMES MAGAZINE, PAGE 8

Thaw gives hope that Cup may run its course

Andrew and Co prepare for competitive debuts

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S harassed rugby union officials will breathe a sigh of relief if the Pilkington Cup fifth-round ties proceed as scheduled today. If the weather intervenes once more, they are looking at such a log jam of league fixtures that an extension to the season becomes a possibility.

The thaw has come just in time, though Newcastle are making a precautionary pitch inspection this morning. However, Harlequins, their opponents, are in situ and the optimism in the North East is shared elsewhere as the 14 clubs who were forced to sit idle a fortnight ago attempt to join Waps in the last eight.

The quarter-final draw has already been made, of course, and that knowledge may prove an additional spur for such clubs as Nottingham and

Bedford. Were Bedford, of the second division, to beat Bristol, then they have the prospect of a home tie against Bath, while Nottingham face a desperate for income, would rather another home tie, against Wasps.

First, however, they must make their way past Gloucester, which, even allowing for their struggles in the depths of the first division, will not be easy. Nevertheless, five of the Nottingham team can remember 1990, when they produced an unexpected 12-3 league win over their opponents today.

Since then, Nottingham have slipped down a rocky road, but they still boast three capped players to Gloucester's even if Simon Hodgkinson, Chris Gray and Gary Rees will not see 30 again. With another old hand in Gary Harley, who retired through injury three years ago, to steady the ship in the

centre, hope will bloom eternal at Beeston.

Will Carling, the England captain, will miss the tie at Newcastle having aggravated a knee while playing against Wales. Will Greenwood and Peter Mensah are paired at centre against a Newcastle team in which Rob Andrew, Nick Poppell, Peter Walton — internationals all — make their competitive debuts. Another week and Tony Underwood might have joined them.

Poppell is one of four Irishmen given leave by the national team management to play in the Cup before heading west for squad training. It is a sore point in Dublin, where Terence College play Lansdowne to decide the Leinster Senior League without, respectively, Niall Hogan and Eric Elwood, neither of whom has been released to play — apparently because Pat

Whelan, the Ireland manager, had not been informed of the fixture.

Jim Staples, the Ireland captain, plays for Harlequins. Conor O'Shea and the uncapped (as yet) David Humphreys for London Irish at Leeds, though the Irish are not travelling until this morning after wasting time and money on an overnight stay a fortnight ago. The delay has proved beneficial for Leeds: they can introduce Colin Stephens, their new player-coach, the former Llanelli and Wales stand-off half, in the hope of closing the gap between the fourth and second divisions.

One Irishman not required for the Cup is Simon Geoghegan, who is still struggling with a strained hamstring. Instead, Bath choose Jon Sleightholme and Aledaio Aledaio on their wings at Wakefield, though they were close to being with Jeremy Guscott. He required a fitness test on a bruised shoulder yesterday and had he withdrawn, Mike Catt would have been moved into his position, despite Catt's expressed wish to play full back from now.

Chris Murphy returns to lock West Harlequins' scrum. Gloucester have a new recruit, Jamie Hamilton in at scrum half against Saracens for the injured Aadel Kardooni and Mark Tainton plays stand-off for Bristol against Bedford because Arwel Thomas is required by Wales.

Thomas, of course, is the incumbent as the Welsh No.10, but Neil Jenkins will make a late charge for the role against Scotland. After a nine-week absence, Jenkins will play for Pontypridd in their delayed Heineken League meeting with Aberavon.



Andrei Chesnokov, of Russia, is comforted by his coach after losing 2-6, 6-7, 7-6, 6-3, 6-1 to Andrea Gaudenzi, of Italy, in the world group Davis Cup match in Rome yesterday

Hull through to indoor final

HULL, the only northern challengers, reached the final of the national indoor hockey club championship at Crystal Palace last night with victory over Stourport and Barford Tigers (Sydney Friskin writes).

Steve Moss scored five times in the 7-3 victory over Barford Tigers while, earlier, a goal from Andy Humphry three seconds from time against Stourport had given Hull a dramatic 6-5 win.

Stourport felt the loss of Imran Sherwani, who withdrew because of injury, and fell behind as Alistair England and Steve Moss scored for Hull. They trailed 4-2 at half-

time, but two goals from Zak Jones brought Stourport level. Parham and then ahead before Hull's late rally.

Two second-half goals from Ian Jennings helped St Albans to a 6-5 win over East Grinstead in pool B. Jennings had levelled the score at 4-4 just before the interval, but a well-taken goal by Boyce restored the East Grinstead lead.

Southgate hope to consolidate their position as leaders of the National League when they entertain Teddington tomorrow, but their visitors are still chasing a top-12 finish to qualify them for first-division hockey next season, when the League will be re-structured.

Guildford are pushing for third place and are at full strength for their home match against Havant. After a 7-1 win last week over Indian Gymkhana, Havant have gained confidence even though they are without Giles, who is recovering from a hernia operation. Perryman returns to the side from England Under-18 duties. Lawson faces a late fitness test.

Today, Hounslow visit Reading, who, along with Cannock, are only two points behind the leaders. Cannock visit St Albans tomorrow.

Beston, nine points clear in the second division, will be severely tested when they visit Bluebirds, who lie third.

McRae hits trouble in Sweden

COLIN McRAE, the world champion, was lying a disappointing tenth late on the opening day of the Swedish Rally near Karlsbad yesterday. Tommi Makinen and Juha Kankkunen were locked in an all-Finnish scrap for the early lead.

With seven of the day's nine special stages completed, Makinen's Mitsubishi Lancer was 20sec ahead of Kankkunen's Toyota Celica. Carlos Sainz, of Spain, now with Ford, was lying third, 14 seconds further back.

McRae, in a Subaru, recorded the best time on the fifth stage, but then lost time in the sixth when he began to shed nails from his studded snow tyres.

Muster at last

Tennis: Three days before becoming the world No.1, Thomas Muster, of Austria, won his first senior match on grass yesterday, beating Marcus Ondruska, of South Africa, 6-2, 7-5, 6-2 in a Davis Cup world group first-round match in Johannesburg. Wayne Ferreira, of South Africa, was the victor in the second round, beating Schranz, of the Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3. The Davis Cup is to be issued for the new No.1 Court at Wimbledon, which is under construction and scheduled for completion in time for the 1997 championships. Up to 1,000 will be available, each at a total cost of £9,900. Successful applicants will be entitled to benefits until 2001.

Fairbrother out

Judo: Nicola Fairbrother, one of Britain's leading hopes for the Olympic Games in Atlanta, made an unexpected early exit from the Tournoi de Paris yesterday when losing in the second round of the under-55kg division to Perri Andersson, of Sweden.

'Wasps' bold plan grounded

THE disruption to Wasps' season, already hit by the loss of two key players in Rob Andrew and Dean Ryan and the ravages the weather has inflicted on their league programme, has continued with a blow to their ambitious plans for redevelopment at their Repton Avenue ground in Sudbury (David Hands writes).

Four months ago, the first division club announced a £2.5 million scheme that would take them forward into the era of open rugby, but this week Brent Council's planning department has told Wasps they will have to reconsider. Local residents have taken issue with the

proposals and if their objections continue to be upheld, it is possible the club would be forced to look for a new home. The pessimistic about the eventual outcome. Sir Pat Lowry, chairman of the club's executive committee, said yesterday: "We want to stay in Brent. We have been there since 1923 and we don't want to leave. The planning decision has been deferred, not rejected."

Wasps want to establish a centre of excellence for north-west London, in conjunction with the council. The problem centres around the present cramped approaches to the ground and a liaison committee will be established to

explain to residents how the flow in and out of the ground will be managed, with particular emphasis on the increased facilities that would be available to the whole community.

"If there is some accommodation to be reached, we will do it," Lowry said, but the setback occurs at an unfortunate time since Wasps not only have to finance their proposed ground changes (which include turning the pitch through 90°) but compete in the playing market against first division rivals, Saracens and Harlequins, both of whom have received money with which to compete in the professional game.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.00 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Bolton v Aston Villa
(2) Coventry v Chelsea
(3) Everton v Man City
(4) Liverpool v Blackburn
(5) Manchester United v Newcastle
(6) Middlesbrough v Arsenal
(7) Nottingham Forest v Reading
(8) Sheffield Wednesday v Wimbledon

Second division

(15) Bradford v Stockport
(16) Bristol City v Bournemouth
(17) Burnley v Crewe
(18) Carlisle v Brentford
(19) Hull v Bristol Rovers
(20) Oxford v Brighton
(21) Peterborough v Exeter
(22) Swansea v Wrexham
(23) Walsall v Notts County
(24) Wigan v Chesterfield
(25) Wycombe v Blackpool
(26) York v Huddersfield

Third division

(44) Accrington v Darnley
(45) Clydebank v St Mirren
(46) Dumbarton v Hamilton
(47) Dundee Utd v Greenock Morton
(48) St Johnstone v Dundee
(49) Stirling v Falkirk
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Second division

(15) Bradford v Stockport
(16) Bristol City v Bournemouth
(17) Burnley v Crewe
(18) Carlisle v Brentford
(19) Hull v Bristol Rovers
(20) Oxford v Brighton
(21) Peterborough v Exeter
(22) Swansea v Wrexham
(23) Walsall v Notts County
(24) Wigan v Chesterfield
(25) Wycombe v Blackpool
(26) York v Huddersfield

Third division

(44) Accrington v Darnley
(45) Clydebank v St Mirren
(46) Dumbarton v Hamilton
(47) Dundee Utd v Greenock Morton
(48) St Johnstone v Dundee
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Never say never to England... but not for the moment



Andrew: exciting times

The process of change through which the England rugby team is now going is not a comfortable one. It has been made worse by the constant glare of publicity that has been turned on to the sport in recent years and certainly by the declaration of the open game this season.

Inevitably, when things are not going well, press and public look back to the times and the individuals who played in the successful teams which created such heightened expectation. I was fortunate enough to be one of them, alongside such players as Brian Moore, Dewi Morris and Dean Richards, and, at one time or another this

season, there have been calls for one or all of us to return to the side. Such speculation is increased when my new club, Newcastle, plays against top-flight opposition, such as Harlequins in the Pilkington Cup today and New South Wales next Tuesday, but there is no prospect of my playing anything other than club rugby this season. I retired from international rugby last October and I have played only two or three games since then.

The job I have been given at Newcastle demands all my attention. It has brought a new focus to my rugby life and I don't yet know where it is going to lead. The game

Rob Andrew rules himself out of the national team reckoning — at least until next season

is changing on a weekly basis and where I am now is exciting, exhilarating. Who knows where we will all be a year from now? For that reason, I am not ruling out any possibility, but life has moved on and it would take a very special set of circumstances for me to appear in an England shirt again. For now, the selectors have their job to do and both Moore and Morris can be discounted: they have retired from first-class rugby. Richards is different: he is still a

member of the squad and whether he plays for England again is a matter of selectorial judgment based on their knowledge of him as a player and the kind of game they want the team to play.

Whenever a longstanding half-back partnership changes — as every one of the five nations in this season's championship is in the process of finding out — it must have a significant impact on the side as a whole. Yet the two positions cannot be looked at in

isolation: they are only part of the character of the team.

Over the past few years, England have identified areas of strength and used them to considerable advantage. Much of the success in that period was based on forward power and, if there was a bias in that direction, at the expense of such runners as Will Carling, Jerry Gascott or Rory Underwood, it could be justified both by results and by the critical influence of the forwards in international rugby.

The trick is to achieve a balance between the two distinct areas of the game and that is not easy. You have two very different groups of people trying to build a game

together, with No 9 and No 10 in the middle of it all attempting to pull the strings. Perhaps Mike Catt's decision to remove himself from contention as a stand-off half will take some pressure from Paul Grayson while the squad as a whole needs its collective confidence restored. That is the role of management.

For me, my season is just beginning and I am looking forward to next September, when I can be a part of a new club team from the start, maybe, at that stage, my old friends, Dean Ryan and Steve Bates, will look at my form with a critical eye and tell me it is time to call it a day!

Sponsor's deal kits out United with £60m

By PETER BALL

MANCHESTER United hit the jackpot yesterday. The club signed a new kit sponsorship and merchandising deal with Umbro worth around £60 million over six years, setting a record for British sport that far surpasses the previous largest sum of £26 million over four years which Reebok agreed with Liverpool last year.

Neither United nor Umbro would release the exact figures, but it is unlikely to be much less than £10 million a year. "You can conjecture that the figures reflect United's status as one of the leading clubs in the world," Peter Kenyon, Umbro's worldwide chief operations officer, said at a hastily arranged press conference yesterday.

That status, financially at least, was increased this week. It is no coincidence that the deal, and the amount, should be agreed in the week that Uefa, the European governing body of football, proposed to

stakes. It came close to gaining Liverpool before Reebok won the contract with a late bid, but Umbro's success in keeping Manchester United will be an even greater disappointment to the company. Nike is believed to have offered United £50 million over four years in an effort to attract the most successful merchandising operation in sport.

"We considered three options," Martin Edwards, the United chairman and chief executive, said yesterday. "We looked at one major multi-brand sports-goods manufacturer, we considered doing the operation ourselves and we looked at Umbro, who are a football specialist."

The previous four-year contract still had two years to run, but it has been subsumed under the new one, taking the agreement up to 2002. The decision to renegotiate now reflected the change in the market with the contract finally being signed yesterday lunchtime, giving time for United to inform the Stock Exchange before releasing the information publicly.

Umbro's partnership with United has proved highly profitable for both parties. The most market-conscious club in England, possibly the world, United already have national retail outlets and even a team of salesmen purveying their products in the Far East. That is likely to expand, with Umbro pursuing the growing Japanese market.

"Umbro have proved to us over the last four years that they are the most effective sports brand in the football marketplace," Edwards said. However, its dynamic partnership with United has not been without its critics, including Tony Blair, the Labour leader, who charged the club with exploiting its supporters with the constant changes of shirt. Yesterday, in the United megastore, a boys' shirt in the latest style, the grey away strip, cost £27.99, with shorts at £14.99 and socks £5.99. The red shirt was being discounted, with a new design ready to be launched later this year.

Forest on the run 46
World Cup rehearsal 46

allow a second English club into the European Cup. With United the leading candidates to take the second place if they do not win the FA Carling Premiership, the amount of Europe-wide television they can guarantee makes them an even hotter property than did the £24 million turnover from their commercial activities, a figure that outstrips Rangers' total income.

Yet the deal also reflects the growing competitiveness of the sportswear industry, which led to the description "sports wars" being coined by one Umbro executive yesterday. Umbro had to hold off challenges from Nike and Reebok, which are both becoming leading players in a lucrative market.

Nike, one of the biggest American companies in the industry, is known to be eager to increase its position in British football and its involvement is pushing up the

Walcott leads moves to break Sri Lanka deadlock



A sign at Sydney's airport sums up Australia's attitude to playing in Colombo as Taylor, centre, and his team begin the journey to India. Photograph: David Grey

Anxiety clouds World Cup gala

By SIMON WILDE

WHEN the first World Cup was staged 21 years ago, it opened to little pomp and ceremony. By way of gesture, England's opening match against India took place at Lord's, where Madan Lal bowled the first ball to John Jameson. Geoff Boycott, referring to turn out for his country rather than his country.

No one will describe tomorrow's opening of the sixth World Cup as understated. More than 100,000 people will assemble inside Eden Gardens, Calcutta, while two billion more watch on television, for a 75-minute spectacular masterminded by Gianfranco Lunetta, who brought the

world the ceremonies that opened the 1990 football World Cup and closed the Barcelona Olympics.

The first cricket ball the crowd will see will be made of laser-beams, into which will descend Sushmita Sen, a former Miss Universe, wrapped in the flags of the 12 competing teams. Controversy has raged in India for weeks about the Miss Sen's decision to divest herself of the flags and hand them to the respective captains.

It will not be last time during the next five weeks India finds itself torn between culture and consumerism as it attempts, along with the other joint-hosts, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, to cash in on a tournament that is expected to gener-

ate profits for its organisers alone of £25 million, some 75 times more than were realised in 1975.

The chances of the deadlock being broken over the refusal of Australia and West Indies to play in Colombo looked to have marginally improved yesterday. Officials from the International Cricket Council (ICC) had no sooner arrived in Calcutta than they began informal talks prior to a meeting of the various parties today.

The diplomacy of Sir Clyde Walcott, the ICC's chairman and David Richards, its chief executive, is the last realistic hope of the crisis being resolved, though the world governing body's reputation as a toothless tiger tempered any optimism.

Richards emerged from one meeting to state that the position was very sensitive. Ali Bacher, the South African board's managing director, said cryptically: "I cannot disclose all the details but let me tell you all good efforts produce good results."

Members of Pileon, the organising committee, were hoping that Walcott's Caribbean connections might open a path to the West Indies team abandoning its boycott of Colombo. But Walcott would say only that he had a number of options in mind.

He can only hope the proximity of tomorrow's carnival will bring home to the relevant parties the absurdity of celebrating contests that will not be taking place.

Jockeys warm to mechanical horse

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

WHO said horses are not machines? Rudolf, a non-thoroughbred of indeterminate sex and age, looks set to become the most sought-after ride in racing — because he is a machine.

The mechanical horse, formally known as "The Ride-Away," is the first of its kind to be installed at a racecourse and will enable jockeys at Newbury to have a warm-up in the weighing room before riding for real at the Berkshire course.

Jamie Osborne, who, like leading riders such as Richard Dunwoody and Frankie Dettori, practises at home on a similar machine, put the stationary nag through its paces yesterday and explained the benefits.

"There are very few sports where the participants would go out and perform without

having a warm-up. You can't drag a real horse into the weighing room and warm up the relevant muscles — but you can on this.

"The muscles we use in riding a horse are unique to riding. Bicycling is the

nearest you get to it but this machine is invaluable. You can push it as long as you like, as hard as you like for as long as you like to get fit at the start of the season or keep you ticking over during a cold snap when racing is off."

HIGH ROUTE/EDGE



Osborne puts the new mechanical horse through its paces in the weighing room at Newbury yesterday.

Racing, pages 44-45

Lions booked to tour South Africa in 1997

HARD on the heels of the International Rugby Football Board's (IRFB) ringing acclamation of the sport's traditional principle of touring, the South African Rugby Football Union (SARFU) confirmed yesterday the visit of the British Isles next year (David Hands writes).

"We view it as a very, very important tour," Edward Griffiths, the SARFU chief executive, said. Though the full itinerary for the 12-match tour in May and June, 1997, will not be finalised until next week, it will include internationals in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. It is hoped to confirm the management team by the end of this season.

One of the decisions taken by the IRFB council at its annual meeting last month was a commitment to a regular programme of tours. "They are fundamental to the dev-

elopment of players," Vernon Pugh, the IRFB chairman, said. "There is a wish on everyone's part that the Lions continue."

Though some individual players and officials in Britain have queried the viability of the touring concept, each of the home unions has been asked to make allowance for a Lions tour every four years in their contractual arrangements with players and clubs. It has yet to be clarified who, in the open era, will pay the players in a combined team: there is a presumption that many of the costs will be borne by the host unions in South Africa and Australasia.

The Lions add variety to the southern-hemisphere season and their tour will slip in between early-season provincial tournaments and the tripartite programme organised between the three powers.

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Spouse will wield power behind the scenes as curtain goes up on yet another Government

Italy turns spotlight on 'Lady M'

"EXIT the brunette, enter the blonde," observed the normally staid *Corriere della Sera* this week. This was not a reference to the apparently endless succession of busy and long-legged female presenters on Italian television, but a political point: every time Italy gets another "revolving door" government, a new First Lady comes in with the new Prime Minister.

Marina Maccanico, wife of Antonio, the Prime Minister-designate, has hardly had time to change the wallpaper at the Palazzo Chigi, the Italian equivalent of 10 Downing Street. Signor Maccanico does not formally take over until he puts together a broad coalition to complete Italy's political and constitutional reforms. In the meantime, Lamberto Dini remains caretaker Prime Minister, sharing the limelight with his wife, Donatella.

In the public mind, however, power has already shifted, and attention is focusing on "Lady M", as the Italian press calls her. Although the Italian man likes to project a macho image, his wife (or mistress) is

ROME FILE
by RICHARD OWEN

often the power behind the throne. A leader's wife, *Il Messaggero* remarked this week, wields "more than half the power" by supporting him, providing him with a refuge and putting up with his female admirers.

Italy's First Ladies have certainly been striking figures. Veronica Berlusconi, second wife of the media tycoon who was briefly Prime

Minister, is a former model who claims that the hyperactive Silvio still finds time to "whisper sweet nothings in my ear". Signora Dini is a powerful and wealthy businesswoman, with interests in Latin America — she has Costa Rican citizenship from her first husband. Signora Maccanico, by contrast, has devoted herself to bringing up her son, now 23, playing

tennis with her husband, and running their home. Rather like her husband, she has operated behind the scenes, with only occasional forays into the business world, including a brief stint in public relations.

The Maccanicos' understated style and discreet social network may prove to be an asset. Signor Maccanico has been Italy's shadowy "Mr Fixit" for decades, rising through the upper echelons of the civil service to be the right hand man of successive Presidents and Prime Ministers. Their third floor flat on the Via della Scrofa, just round the corner from the Parliament and the Prime Minister's office in Rome's old city,

is also the headquarters of the *Alleanza Nazionale*, the "post-Fascist" party led by Gianfranco Fini, whose support for the Maccanico reforms is crucial.

The Maccanicos have for years entertained Italy's most powerful businessmen, bankers and politicians, both at the Via della Scrofa and at a tennis club frequented by the elite. Their intimate friends include Gianni Agnelli of Fiat, Enrico Cuccia of Mediobanca and Carlo De Benedetti of Olivetti — three men who between them own most of Italy.

As Italy's party leaders pondered Signor Maccanico's reform programme this week, Signor Agnelli told them bluntly: "I know Maccanico, he's a first class man."

Signora Maccanico would seem the ideal woman to charm the Left and the Right, as well as the Agnellis and Cuccias. She is a statuesque blonde with piercing blue eyes who combines a striking presence with political acumen — she has a law degree — and a diverting passion for the cinema.



Marina Maccanico, wife of the new Prime Minister

Women rule the roost

MOST Italian men will not have been surprised by the news that women wield more than half the power in high places: the same is true in low places.

The magazine *Oggi* this week gave the Italian male ego a further battering with a photo-montage showing an elegant female hand dumping a despondent male figure in a dustbin, with the caption, "Poor boy, what a nasty end." The accompanying opinion poll showed that men are boss in only 7 per cent of households. In 69 per cent, there is joint control.

There were similar figures for who controls the family budget — husband and wife in 57 per cent of households — and who decides where the family goes on holiday — joint decision in 69.5 per cent of homes. In only 15 per cent of households does the man make the big financial decisions. Some attribute this to women's growing independence.

Tiger smugglers sentenced to jail

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

TWO German smugglers have become the first men to be tried and convicted in a Western court for attempting to sell the skin of a Siberian tiger.

The verdict — in which one brother was sentenced to eight months in jail, and the other, to one year — marks an important milestone in the battle to save one of the world's most endangered species. There are only about 200 of the tigers left in the Russian Far East, prowling the Taiga between Vladivostok and Khabarovsk.

The two were arrested at a motorway café outside Bonn, where they were supposed to hand over the skin of the illegally killed tiger for around £25,000. The men were ethnic Germans, born in Russia, and were acting for a Russian mafia boss. Police searching their flat found a

tiger head in the deep freeze, a polar bear skin and several other rare furs.

Every part of the tiger can yield a profit. Asians, in particular, are willing to pay high sums for parts of the Siberian tiger. The skull kept near a pillow is supposed to scare away evil spirits — there was an ancient Asian tiger, god-called Amba. Tiger bones are supposed to help against rheumatism, the fat from the animal, is used to cure haemorrhoids and vomiting. Tiger teeth, according to some Asian superstitions, guard against asthma and rabies. The tiger brain, administered in the correct dosage, is an antidote for spots and laziness.

A tiger processed into pills, creams, balms, compresses and powders can be worth around £450,000. In Korea, for example, tiger penis soup can cost up to £200 a serving. The reason is that male diners hope to increase their potency — the Siberian tiger is capable of copulation every 20 minutes.

The skins are in a way a mere footnote to the business, the West showing the greatest interest. Pressure from the World Wide Fund for Nature among others has led to hunting laws being tightened, but this week's sentences are the first time that a jail term has been enforced.



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THE TIMES



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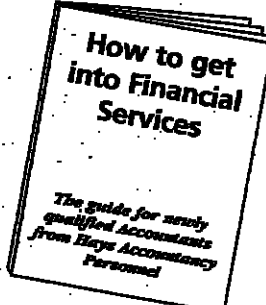
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■ OPINION

After Birmingham, what? Sir Simon Rattle must go out and prove himself all over again



■ VISUAL ART 1

The very epitome of a Victorian artist? The centenary shows for Lord Leighton shed new light

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ VISUAL ART 2

Cézanne of the day: our celebration of the Tate show focuses on Woman with a Coffeepot



■ BASE NOTES

Dame Diana Rigg is expected to tour America with the National Theatre's Mother Courage

What will Sir Simon Rattle do with the rest of his life? I have thought of little else since Tuesday, when our curly-mopped maestro made the "shock announcement" that the musical world had been expecting for at least ten years. He is quitting his City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. When his contract expires, in 1998, he will have served a stupendous 18 years. Time for a fresh challenge. At 41, he can't have more than another six decades of conducting left.

Where now? A depressing question, as Rattle surely realises. Naturally, there will be dozens of offers, loaded with cash and larded with synchplicity. Not so much from the great European orchestras, perhaps. Rattle blew his chances with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in one dreadful night ten years ago. The Berlin Phil is wedded to Claudio Abbado, and the Vienna Phil has not had a principal conductor in 153 years. But America: that's different. Of

Rattle can't sell out now, can he?

the "Big Five" orchestras, only one has a conductor under 60. Any of them could come wooing Rattle: Boston has been mentioned most often. Or our boy could stay in Britain. He wouldn't touch the London orchestras, of course. Who would? But he might take on the Royal Opera if he can reconcile the task of amusing the £120-a-ticket crowd with his carefully-nurtured "caring liberal" persona.

It's fun playing the fantasy-league conducting game, is it not? There's just one problem. The whole notion of the "conductor superstar" might soon be irrelevant. Rattle is an astute chap: he must see how close the classical music world is to extinction. He may well have the stamina to sustain a career into the mid-21st century, but will there be any orchestras left to conduct by then?

Consider the evidence. First, nobody has yet come near to cracking the "modern music problem". There is good music being written, but concertgoers have been conned too often into listening to meretricious note-spinning: now they are wary of paying to hear anything new.

Sir John Drummond may attack them (as he did on these pages last September) for being "intellectually lazy". But the real intellectual sloths are the conductors, composers and impresarios who have ducked or botched the job of promoting the best new music to a wide public. They have condemned the conductors of the future to being nothing more than museum curators offering guided tours of Brahms to ever-dwindling audiences. No sort of job for a zestful character like Rattle.

IN THE ARTS



RICHARD MORRISON

That is one reason for depression. There are more. For most of this century the record industry has been the motor of the classical music world. It has kept hundreds of orchestras in business: made

thousands of soloists and conductors rich; turned a few into household names. Now the old motor is grinding to a halt. Everything that can be recorded has been, many times. Who needs another new Beethoven cycle? There are dozens in the vaults, just waiting to be snipped into lots of *Wonderful World of Beethoven* compilation CDs and retailed in supermarkets for £3.99.

That is bad luck for Rattle and the other gifted conductors now slipping gracefully into late boyhood. Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mariss Jansons, Mark Elder, Riccardo Chailly: they are all victims of technological history. The record industry doesn't need them any more.

The question is, does anybody need them? In a spiritual sense, I

mean. A gripping new book — *Charisma in Politics, Religion and Media*, by David Aberbach (published by Macmillan) — draws fascinating parallels between the traumatic early lives of leaders such as Churchill, Hitler and Roosevelt and those of entertainers like Chaplin, Lennon and Monroe who also exerted a quasi-mystical hold on mass audiences. Having "struggled for inner wholeness", these charismatic stars can better embody the fractured mood of their nation.

Aberbach doesn't mention conductors, but he easily might have done. Mahler, Klemperer, Karajan, Bernstein, Turteltube, Giulini — figures who are central to the notion of "the maestro" — fit his definition very well.

The problem with the Rattle generation is that they don't mea-

sure up in this charismatic sense. They are successful businessmen who lead comfortable lives. Their interpretations are often clever, but not wrenched from the black hole of trauma. How could they be? Yet if conductors are again to inspire the public, they must reclaim their mythic dimension.

Rattle could do that. It would be easy for him to settle for super-rich comfort now. But that would betray all he stood for in Birmingham. There, he gave classical music a new social and civic purpose, a new audience and the makings of a new repertoire. Now he should attempt to do the same in the international arena.

I don't know how — or even whether it is possible at all. Henry Wood achieved it when he started the Proms, and Bernstein intermittently did so in the 1950s. But the world is a more fragmented place now. I just know that the mission to save classical music is urgent — and that Rattle is possibly the only person capable of leading it.

Victorian volcano of bridled passion

John Russell Taylor goes in search of the inner life of Lord Leighton on the centenary of his death

Frederic, Baron Leighton was the very image of the Victorian artist as public figure. This meant, of course, something very different from our own conception of a life led in public. Nowadays we have endless documentation which tells us more, sometimes, than we might care to know about the emotional life and sexual preferences of, say, Jeff Koons or David Hockney. Not so that we are left in ignorance of the exterior facts, but what made them tick is often a very different matter.

With Leighton we have the image, all right; and an extremely imposing one it is, as the plethora of exhibitions marking the centenary of his death on January 25 amply confirm. The achievements roll past in majestic array: his first major public success with *Cimabue finding Giotto* in 1864, *Fields of Florence* before he had turned 20; elected an Associate RA in 1864, when he was 34; full RA in 1868; president of the RA in 1878 and knighted for good measure; made a baronet in 1885 and finally created a baron (the first artist to achieve such recognition) in the New Year Honours of 1896, less than a month before his death. His funeral was held at St Paul's.

We also know that he was regarded as one of the handsomest men of his day, much commemorated in paint, sculpture and photography. He was surrounded by a

bevy of adoring and fiercely protective society ladies, but never married. There was never, Mrs Barrington, his first biographer, assures us, any hint of impropriety with any of his models, even though some of them were professionals, which normally meant

● Leighton Centennial Exhibition, sponsored by Christie's, Royal Academy, London W1 (0171-439 7439), until April 21

● The Leighton Frescoes and Leighton as a Book Illustrator, V&A, London SW7 (0171-938 8441) until Sept 8 and May 6 respectively

● Leighton and his Sculptural Legacy, presented by Joanna Barnes, Matthiessen Gallery, London SW1 (0171-930 4215), until Mar 22

● Relentless Perfection: At Home with Lord Leighton, Leighton House, London W14 (0171-602 3316) until April 21

that they were no better than they ought to be.

If she does not also insist that no scandal attached to his host of young male proteges and his frequent painting of males in the nude, that was because any hint of such goings-on was unthinkable of him, even in the immediate aftermath of the Wilde trial. He was either unimaginably circumspect or totally celibate.

Does it matter which? Well, yes and no. To mark the centenary of his death, Leighton House is putting on a

show which aims to recreate life there in Leighton's heyday. It must have been pretty luxurious, and the aesthetic splendour of the house's Arab Hall somehow suggests harp, exotic perfumes and strange sins. But in cold fact the tone seems to have been all too high-minded.

But what or whom did he love, what or whom did he passionately desire? Or was he a great artistic technician but a sadly cold fish?

Leighton was the leader of what William Gauri dubbed the "Victorian Olympians" and lived up to the label in his demeanour and his work. His subject matter is mainly from classical myth. There are occasional incursions into the Bible, but even in a nominally Old Testament image such as *Jonathan's Token to David* his visual world is firmly classical.

At worst we might quote at him Arthur Hallam's warning to the young Tennyson: "Alfred, we cannot live in art." Leighton might reasonably answer that he did not: his life was full of teaching, working for the Royal Academy, helping the young and good works of all kinds. But essentially he did.

Most likely all we shall ever know, and all we need to know, about his inner life is in his art. It is not so much an art of escapism as the creation of a parallel world where all are beautiful, all movements are graceful, all colours are clear-cut. But nothing in it is ever



The handsomest man of his day: self portrait of Frederic, Lord Leighton, painted in 1880. He never married, but attracted no sexual scandal even after the Wilde case

left vague, is not minutely observed.

Leighton was one of the most brilliant draughtsmen in an age of deep concern with the art of drawing. His major paintings were preceded by endless studies, as may be seen both at the Academy and at the Victoria and Albert, where his great murals of *The Arts of Industry Applied to War and to Peace* have been cleaned and made the centre of displays which show every stage of their elaboration. Though he produced only

three major sculptures, Leighton was disproportionately influential in sculpture, mainly because of this skill in rendering physical action (the point is well taken in the sculptural show organised by Joanna Barnes at the Mathewson Gallery); but he also often worked out ideas for painting in

sculptural form, and a number of these three-dimensional sketches appear in the Academy show. Clearly his art was his reality, and its hard finish holds in check, but perhaps only just, a volcanic intensity of feeling. He is, more than anything else, the English Ingres.



"She gazes towards us, her frowning solemnity offset by the hint of a smile": the magisterial splendour of *Woman with a Coffeepot*, c.1895, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

PERSPECTIVES ON A PIONEER: DAY 3

Richard Cork continues his guide to the Tate's Cézanne retrospective

Nobody knows who this woman is, nor precisely when Cézanne painted her. But she has become one of the most unforgettable, iconic figures in Western art.

The blue-robed sitter could hardly be more imposing. She gazes towards us, her frowning solemnity offset by the hint of a smile. The thin hair flattened on her crown enables Cézanne to emphasise her head's essential, sculptural form. He stiffens the deep folds running through the dress, so that her body takes on an almost metallic strength. Two rough hands rest on the ample expanse of her lap, but they seem ready for action. Indeed, the woman's entire body is erect and alert.

No doubt she welcomes the chance to savour her coffee, and take stock of the duties ahead. But even the coffeepot seems stern and vigilant, while the white cup rises from its luminous saucer with extraordinary forcefulness.

Cézanne softens the mood on the left edge, where hazy flowers seem to detach themselves from the wallpaper and float in space. On the whole, though, he asserts a resolute sense of order throughout this masterful painting.

● Cézanne is at the Tate Gallery until April 28, sponsored by Ernst & Young. For advance booking, which is advised, telephone 0171-430 0000

● On Monday, Richard Cork discusses *Mont Sainte-Victoire* Seen from Bibemus, c.1891

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Sun 11 Feb 4.00pm

**Barbican
Celebrity
Recital**
Nikolai
Demidenko piano
Piano works by
Chopin & Schumann
£5 £10 £15

Sun 11 Feb 7.30pm

London Symphony Orchestra
Myung-Whun Chung conductor
Dvořák Symphony No. 6. Janáček Glagolitic Mass.
Andrew Davis soprano Anne-Marie Owens mezzo-soprano
Sergiu Lurii tenor Stephen Richardson bass
London Symphony Chorus Tickets £5 - £20

Wed 14 Feb 7.30pm

MELODY POPS
**VALENTINE'S DAY
LOVE CLASSICS**
Embraceable You (Gershwin), All I Ask of You
(Lloyd Webber), Barbra Streisand Selection.
Imagine (Leeson), MacArthur Park (Webb),
Something (Harrison), Statuesque Valentine
Medley, The Love Songs of Stevie Wonder and
Barry Manilow's Timeless Ballads.
With guest singers
JACQUI SCOTT (Star of BBC's Showstopper) and
SAMUEL KANE (singer appearing in Showstopper)
LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, DAVID ARNOLD cond.
A Valentine's Day Bonus for every Lady in the audience
£15.00, £10.00, £7.50, £5.00, £2.50, £1.00
Raymond Gubbay in association with Melody Plus

Thu 15 Feb 7.30pm

London Symphony Orchestra
Myung-Whun Chung conductor
Shostakovich Symphony No. 6
Messiaen's 10th Ravel Pictures from an Exhibition.
Messiaen's Prelude and Copland from Symphony for
Tuba £5 - £20

Fri 23 Feb 7.30pm

**English Chamber
Orchestra**
with
Heinz Holliger
conductor/oboe
ARTHUR HONEGGER Pastorale d'été
RICHARD STRAUSS Oboe Concerto
BEETHOVEN Symphony No.1
£5, £11, £16, £19.50
Sponsored by Café de Wines

Sat 24 Feb 8.00pm

**THE LONDON
PHILHARMONIC**
PLAYS CLASSIC FAVORITES
ANTHONY MULLIS cond. SARAH BETH BRIDGES piano
Rachmaninov Overture, Barber of Seville
Schubert Symphony No.8, Undiscovered
Mozart Piano Concerto No.21, Elvira Madigan
Beethoven Symphony No.3 Eroica
£15.00, £10.00, £7.50, £5.00, £2.50, £1.00
Raymond Gubbay Ltd in assoc. with The Daily Telegraph

0171 638 8891

From - Sun daily
The Barbican Centre is owned, leased, and
managed by the Corporation of London

CLANNAID
— plus Guests
MAY 1996 TOUR

10 NOTTINGHAM Royal Centre 8.00-10.00 0115 952 24
11 LIVERPOOL Empire 8.00-10.00 0151 709 555
12 CARDIFF St David's Hall 8.00-10.00 01222 374444
13 READING The Hexagon 8.00-10.00 01235 59591
14 BRISTOL Colston Hall 8.00-10.00 01177 22243
15 PORTSMOUTH Guildhall 8.00-10.00 01705 22422
16 LIVERPOOL De Montfort Hall 8.00-10.00 0151 23311
17 CAMBRIDGE Corn Exchange 8.00-10.00 01223 35851

Monday 13 & Tuesday 14
LONDON Royal Albert Hall
Box Office & Credit Card 0171 589 8212
or from the following agents: First Call 0171 424 1000
Ticketmaster 0171 544 4444, Stagecoach 0171 734 6932,
Albion 0171 589 3161

18 BIRMINGHAM Symphony Hall 8.00-10.00 0121 212 3333
19 COVENTRY Fairfield Halls 8.00-10.00 02462 555 5291
20 MANCHESTER Apollo 8.00-10.00 0161 275 1111
21 ABERDEEN Capitol 8.00-10.00 01224 555 5291
22 EDINBURGH Usher Hall 8.00-10.00 0131 222 4444
23 NEWCASTLE City Hall 8.00-10.00 0191 222 4444
24 SHEFFIELD City Hall 8.00-10.00 0114 222 4444
25 BRADFORD St George's Hall 8.00-10.00 01274 755 555
26 GUNDSBY Auditorium 8.00-10.00 01472 31111
27 YORK Barbican 8.00-10.00 01904 42222

Tickets from Box Office & all usual agents
Agency and Credit Card bookings subject to booking fee

**CLASSICAL
GALA NIGHT**
DAZZLING LASER DISPLAY
SAT. 24th FEBRUARY at 7.30pm

William Tell Overture, Liberty Bell March, Finlandia, (Chorus of the
Hobans Staves (Hobans), Tchaikovsky Polka, Pachelbel's Duet,
Pomp and Circumstance March No.1 (Land of Hope and Glory),
Bolero, Grand March (Aida), Overture (Cavalleria Rusticana),
Skaters Waltz, Salsara Dance, Innamorata (Cavalleria Rusticana),
1812 Overture with Cannon and Mortar Effect

London Concert Orchestra
David Arnold conductor Julian Gwyn tenor
William Dingley baritone Royal Choral Society
Band and Fanfare Truppers of the Welsh Guards
Tickets £25.00, £15.00, £10.00, £5.00

Royal Festival Hall
Box Office: 0171 960 4242

Royal Festival Hall

Royal Festival Hall RPH1 Tel: 0171 960 4200, 10am-8pm

**RAYMOND GUBBAY presents
BEETHOVEN**
Overture, Leonore No.3
Piano Concerto No.5 (Emperor)
Symphony No.5

THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC
ADRIAN LEAPER cond HUGH TINNEY piano
£5, £15, £25, £35, £55, £75, £95, £125, £150, £175, £200, £225, £250, £275, £300, £325, £350, £375, £400, £425, £450, £475, £500, £525, £550, £575, £600, £625, £650, £675, £700, £725, £750, £775, £800, £825, £850, £875, £900, £925, £950, £975, £1000, £1025, £1050, £1075, £1100, £1125, £1150, £1175, £1200, £1225, £1250, £1275, £1300, £1325, £1350, £1375, £1400, £1425, £1450, £1475, £1500, £1525, £1550, £1575, £1600, £1625, £1650, £1675, £1700, £1725, £1750, £1775, £1800, £1825, £1850, £1875, £1900, £1925, £1950, £1975, £2000, £2025, £2050, £2075, £2100, £2125, £2150, £2175, £2200, £2225, £2250, £2275, £2300, £2325, £2350, £2375, £2400, £2425, £2450, £2475, £2500, £2525, £2550, £2575, £2600, £2625, £2650, £2675, £2700, £2725, £2750, £2775, £2800, £2825, £2850, £2875, £2900, £2925, £2950, £2975, £3000, £3025, £3050, £3075, £3100, £3125, £3150, £3175, £3200, £3225, £3250, £3275, £3300, £3325, £3350, £3375, £3400, £3425, £3450, £3475, £3500, £3525, £3550, £3575, £3600, £3625, £3650, £3675, 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MUSIC

A British debut at 92 — or is it 93? Russian maestro Ilya Musin prepares for the Barbican



RISING STAR

Belinda Hatley has (very daintily) battled her way to the front row of the Royal Ballet

THE TIMES ARTS



RECORDS

Billy Crystal in *Forget Paris*, and other new videos and records, reviewed in Weekend, page 14



ON MONDAY

How did Wagner fare? Rodney Milnes reviews the new *Tristan and Isolde* at the Coliseum

Just what took you so long?

Hilary Finch talks to a nonagenarian Russian conductor on the eve of his London debut

When Ilya Alexandrovich Musin makes his London debut with the Royal Philharmonic at the Barbican next Saturday, he will be in his ninety-third or ninety-fourth year: it all depends on your historical viewpoint. He was born on Christmas Eve, 1903, by the old Russian calendar; and his birthday changed to January 7, 1904, when the Western calendar was later adopted.

St Petersburg, of course, got through three name changes between the day when he and Shostakovich enrolled together as students and the evening a year ago when Musin conducted the St Petersburg Philharmonic in the programme of Mozart, Rimsky-Korsakov and Prokofiev which he will be bringing to London.

Musin has been the single most important influence in forging the so-called Leningrad school of conducting, and with it a legacy of conductor-pupils such as Valery Gergiev, Yakov Kreizberg, Semyon Bychkov and Mariss Jansons who are now shaping the musical fortunes of both Eastern and Western Europe. But Musin himself was caught in the wheel of time. The more visible fame and influence now enjoyed by his pupils was firmly denied him by history.

He was one of the very few conductors who refused to join the "Creative Union of Musicians and Composers" in the years of Stalin. Consequently, he did not exist. "In order to be recognised as a musician, one had to be constantly praising Stalin. I kept independent of

any union, any party. Of course, it halted my career. But what I hate most is to be dependent on someone else."

His musical fulfilment was to come entirely through teaching. And he is as passionate about it today as he was when he worked with his first students at the St Petersburg Conservatoire. His philosophy is simply that "music must be made visible with the hands".

Just how this was to be done, he had to find out for himself, first learning from Nikolai Malko, the pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov who introduced Shostakovich's First Symphony to London in 1935, and, above all, following closely every rehearsal of the conductors from the West who flooded into Leningrad in the early 1920s.

"You touch the sound with your fingers"

The first move, it seems, is to throw away the baton. "Yes, since the baton is the artificial part of our conducting, something we add on to the arm. It is difficult, after all, to be expressive while clenching the fist. So much easier when you can touch the sound with the tips of your fingers."

At a Royal Academy masterclass recently, where the dreaded stick was much in evidence, Musin, a lean, dapper figure in a tweed jacket and polished brogues, quietly tells his students to "relate to the baton as an artist relates to the brush. Not from the shoulder, but with the very tip. And, as a pianist takes the sound from the piano, so you must take the sound from your players. Feel how many sounds there are within each beat."

As for the beat itself, "the first thing is to create an



Getting the point: Ilya Musin, 92, instructs student conductor Ilan Volkov, 19, at the Royal Academy of Music

underlying rhythm for the players, and this is done with the wrist. Many other gestures are used to break that rhythm. But whatever you do with the arm, throw your wrist at the rhythm. Show the last beat in the bar by lowering the wrist and hitting the beat. Now, one, two, three, one, two."

There will sadly be no Shostakovich in the Barbican programme: after suffering three heart attacks, Musin feels "spiritually and emotionally more than eager to conduct Shostakovich — but my

body will not have it". What remains, though, are his memories. Of that first day when they stood on the steps of the St Petersburg Conservatoire together: he 16, Shostakovich 13. Of the day when he and a group of friends sat in the apartment of Rimsky-Korsakov's nephew and listened to Shostakovich playing the first two movements of his First Symphony at the piano. Of the day when the two of them sat together at the piano and hammered their way through four-hand transcriptions of all of Wagner's overtures... Musin has a particularly

strong personal view on the still-vexed subject of the Fifth Symphony. Was it an apology to Stalin for previous anti-Soviet works? The *Times* obituary, after all, declared that Shostakovich was a "committed believer in Communism and Soviet power". Was it, as *Testimony*, the famous memoirs related to Solomon Volkov, would have it, rather the voice of Shostakovich as *yurodivy*, or wise fool, revealing the lashes of the whip which cried: "You must rejoice, you must rejoice!" "I have never read Volkov's book. It wasn't available to

me. But I feel it is probably closer to the truth than anyone could ever expect. For me, the Fifth Symphony is Shostakovich's only self-portrait. Through the conspiracy of music he showed his true self. As my student Semyon Bychkov once put it, the ending is emphatically not about rejoicing. What it says is: 'Beat me harder! Beat me harder! Beat me harder!' The audience at the premiere wept. They knew well what the work meant."

● Ilya Musin conducts the RPO at the Barbican next Saturday at 7.30pm (0171-638 8891)

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

BELINDA HATLEY

Age: 25

Profession: Soloist with Royal Ballet



How it all began: Started dance lessons in a church hall in Sussex, got into the Royal Ballet School at 13. "I almost didn't get there. Just before my audition I was struck down with appendicitis. Luckily they didn't have to take it out or I would have missed my audition." Joined Covent Garden in 1988.

A bite of the cherry: Last season she got her first Aurora, thanks to the indisposition of the leading ballerinas. "It made me so hungry for more. It gave me a surge of confidence. I want to build on that now. I am desperate for more shows. Still waiting for the chance to do another full-length role. In the meantime, she is busy starring in Matthew Hart's new ballet, *Dances with Death*, in which she plays a woman fighting the Aids virus.

But she cannot fight the hierarchy of a large ballet company: "It is difficult not being able to choose your own roles. It gives you a dreadful sense of paranoia and self-doubt; it's constantly like auditioning. The hopes and then the disappointments when the cast sheet goes up."

There is a lot of competition: "When I stand behind Sylvie Guillem in class, I think to myself, 'Why did I ever start?' But you can't compare yourself to someone else; that's the beginning of the end."

More than a passing resemblance to Ian Botham? "I think I am a good all-rounder. I don't shine in any one area but I can lend myself to very classical work or Balanchine or Ashton." Add humility to her list of virtues: she's a really lovely dancer with true musical heart.

The worst part of the job: "The long hours, especially on those days when I am in at 8am to put on my make-up, then spend all day in class and rehearsal. Then having to get ready for a performance, then the performance, and the curtain comes down at 10.30pm. I had a day like that yesterday."

What happens in 1997 when Covent Garden closes? "I think we're all worried about the future. We'll probably be touring a lot, but what people are concerned about is how much repertoire we will be able to sustain on the road. They see a long line of *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauties* looming. But the Opera House needs to be redeveloped. There are holes on the stage — very dangerous in our point shoes — and when it rains during a performance, you have to dance around the puddles."

DEBRA CRAINE

THE SUNDAY TIMES

FASHION PREVIEW

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Devolution is not a revolution

Lord Irvine defends Labour's proposed Scottish parliament

My opponent on the Woolsack, the Lord Chancellor, has made a rare intervention (in an article in *The Times* on February 7) in the party political debate, with his attempt to take Labour to task over its proposals for constitutional change in general and devolution to Scotland in particular. But his attack is riddled with contradictions.

Lord Mackay of Clashfern rightly extols the virtues of the Union. As a Scot who practises law in England, I too value the bonds of friendship, common history and common interest which keep our two countries together. But Lord Mackay conflates the desire for reform of the Union and renewal of the friendship between Scotland and England through devolution with the breaking of the Union.

Devolution will establish a Scottish parliament firmly within the Union. It has, at one time or another, been supported by all the main political parties, including the Conservatives. In the Declaration of Perth in 1968, Ted Heath said: "This then is our desire: to keep the United Kingdom united, but at the same time to see power more widely diffused within the framework of a united country."

Those sentiments were held by many Conservatives during the 1970s, though few dare speak them today.

The Union is a partnership of the nations which would be strengthened if Westminster decides to respond to a deep sense of grievance in Scotland. The danger to the Union is to refuse to listen to the people, or to say, as the Conservatives do, "you may vote for separation if you wish, but it is not legitimate to vote for a reformed Union".

Lord Mackay is confident that a Scottish parliament could not improve policy in such areas as the Scottish educational or legal systems. How can this assertion be justified when the whole point of devolution is to bring decision-making closer to the people and to pursue policies which command popular support? It is precisely the feeling that central government ignores Scottish opinion that has given rise to the strong support for devolution.

Lord Mackay should remember how Scotland's sense of grievance was fanned to an unprecedented level of bitterness when his Government used Scotland as a laboratory for the poll tax a year before England and against the wishes of practically every Scot. And does he for a moment believe that a Scottish parliament would have taken Scotland's water services out of local control and placed them in the hands of unelected quangos?

The great flaw in Lord Mackay's argument is his inconsistency in saying both that the Edinburgh parliament would be a sop and that "break-up of the United Kingdom would then be but a step away". The Tories cannot make up their minds whether or not devolution is a meaningless or a substantial reform, and in their confusion they are left arguing that meaningful change is impossible. If Lord Mackay believes devolution is a sop, then why

would it undermine the Union?

The truth is that Conservative rhetoric on this matter has lost touch with the reality. Devolution is a sensible, practical policy for the decentralisation of government within the United Kingdom. This is acknowledged by the Government in its plans for a legislative assembly for Northern Ireland as part of a package designed to keep that part of the United Kingdom in the Union. It simply will not wash to advocate such policies but at the same time to argue that devolution proposed for any where else would be a constitutional catastrophe.

Scotland already enjoys a substantial degree of administrative devolution. The problem is that there is no direct accountability to the Scottish people. Labour proposes to make this extensive administrative devolution, and distinct law-making, properly accountable to the people while preserving the immense value of the Union.

Lord Mackay raises the so-called West Lothian Question, which in truth is not a question, but a consequence of preserving the Union. The British constitution grows pragmatically, not by abstract theory. What Labour proposes is a constitutional settlement which will strengthen the Union, not imperil it.

A clear distribution of functions between a Scottish parliament and the United Kingdom Parliament should prevent disputes arising but if, over time, any should arise they would be dealt with either by the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which amounts to much the same thing.

On taxation, there is no constitutional reason why a law-making body should not have some room for flexibility over its budget. After all, this is a power which is granted to every local authority in the land and one many Conservatives in the 1970s thought the Scottish assembly should have. Nobody in Scotland should pay a penny more or less in tax unless parties have placed such a plan before the electors. And as George Robertson has said, we have no plans to raise taxes.

To try to polarise the debate between the unhappy status quo or separatism is absurd, as is the charge that devolution and separatism are blood relations. Many countries have devolved power successfully, and have unleashed the talents and diversity of the nations within them. In Britain there is great potential in following a similar path.

The Union has served us well, and it must be preserved for the future. Conservatives do it no service by arguing that reform is impossible in the face of the clamour for change from Scotland. Reform is both possible and desirable, and will be carried through by Labour. And when it happens, Lord Mackay and I, as Scots who spend our working lives in England, can be sure that we will have a Union better equipped to face the challenges of the future.

Lord Irvine of Lairg, QC, is Shadow Lord Chancellor.

Tim Hames on the Republican warhorse whose campaign for the White House opens on Monday

The smart money is still on Bob Dole

He is 72 years old in a nation that prides itself on youth and vitality. He is a career politician who came to Washington when President Kennedy was inaugurated, running in an era when Americans hate Congress: a moderate in a party apparently full of Bible-bashing, gun-loving, tax-hating conservatives. Yet, despite all this, and over \$25 million of advertising spent by one opponent alone, the odds are still heavily on Robert Dole becoming the Republican candidate for President. In temperatures that could well fall 20 degrees below freezing, the citizens of Iowa, gathered in more than 2,000 meetings, will decide on Monday whether the Senator from Kansas is indeed the inevitable man that he seems.

The Dole candidacy often seems like a throwback to a bygone world. The last political survivor of the Second World War generation, gearing himself up to challenge the first President of the Vietnam avoidance brigade. Having failed spectacularly as a vice-presidential candidate in 1976 and presidential aspirant in 1980 and 1988, sunk by the electors of New Hampshire on both occasions, he aims to defy the past, his age, and the deep pockets of his rival Steve Forbes, and to grasp his party's greatest prize.

Dole's survival, and probable triumph, are in part because his seeming liabilities are, in practice, his

assets. After nearly four years of hyperactive, but not particularly effective, leadership from the self-proclaimed baby-boom President, with a White House manned by twenty-somethings, older Americans respond enthusiastically to the Dole campaign call for adult leadership and "it's time for the grownups". The striking contrast between his own service in war — wounds which left him in various hospitals for four years, with a right arm that never recovered — and the self-pitying neurosis of so many of Bill Clinton's contemporaries, is the basis of the Senator's support. Age may be an issue, but so is character. Character is the Dole campaign theme.

For all their public distaste for politicians, Americans tend to prefer men they know in the White House, and swiftly regret their more spontaneous choices. Every Republican in the United States knows of Robert Dole. He is already the longest

serving Senate Republican leader this century. Since 1992 he has been exclusively, or in combination with the mercurial Newt Gingrich, the nearest American political system has known to a Leader of the Opposition. Unlike in Britain, this position is usually not an asset. If Dole is victorious he will be the first Senate majority leader in American history to win a nomination.

Dole is the party man through and through. Probably his biggest asset in 1996 is support from Republican governors of America's states. They control the local party organisation, and influence Republican activists. In Iowa, Dole is supported by the longest-serving governor in the country; in New Hampshire, by one of the most popular. If his campaign stumbles in either state, he is cushioned by backing from other office-holders.

He also benefits from the opposition. The candidates who might have really offered a challenge — Richard

Cheney, Jack Kemp, and above all Colin Powell — never emerged. The Republican pack has failed to capture the public imagination. The large conservative vote has been sliced up between Phil Gramm, Pat Buchanan and now Steve Forbes, among others, allowing no single alternative to surge forward. Unless the electors of Iowa and New Hampshire are unusually decisive, note will.

The Forbes phenomenon of recent weeks has said much about the weakness of the rest. Last weekend, Mr Forbes aired a staggering 300 campaign commercials in New Hampshire. Despite these saturation tactics, his bandwagon seems to have stopped and support is returning to the front-runner. The ultimate impact of the Forbes millions, like the protracted teasing from Colin Powell, may have been to help the Senator by chalking the candidacies of others.

In truth, Bob Dole's real — and dangerous — opponent on Monday

night is none of the nine different contenders but an invisible one called "expectations". Having held convincing leads over his rivals in all national polls for well over two years, his task is to win well.

For the American press, this contest has been a dull affair. Pundits will scrutinise the Dole vote in Iowa less against those of Forbes, Gramm and Buchanan, than against his own 37 per cent, which he achieved when soundly beating George Bush here in 1988. The Senator's team have noted dryly that press expectations for the New Hampshire primary are not taking his disappointing 27 per cent showing there in 1988 as the benchmark. But if he comes first in the opening two contests by double-digit margins, the Republican race is effectively over.

Can the inevitable man become President? The White House calls him their favourite opponent. Polls at present are encouraging for the President. Clinton has made the most of Republican efforts to take difficult decisions since they won control of Congress. However, this argument is familiar. We have recent experience of a southern Democrat President seeking re-election against a Republican "too old and unelectable". The election was 1980. Ronald Reagan had the last laugh in that encounter.

Dr Tim Hames is a lecturer in politics at Christ Church, Oxford.

Pilgrims of the blockbuster

Cézanne was a self-publicist who would have delighted in the attention and recognition being paid to his work by the public who have queued for hours to see it

The question is: can Cézanne beat Picasso? Matisse did. But then Matisse worldwide beat Monet, who beat Picasso, who beat Manet. Vermeer is coming through strong, though he will suffer from being in The Hague. None of them beats King Tut.

The Cézanne show that moved from Paris to open this week at the Tate is a sensation. Says the ticket agent: "It's comparable with a major rock act like Bruce Springsteen." The hyperbole begins with attendance figures and goes on to money. The entrance charge is £7 and the booking office is perpetually engaged. Queues stretch round the block and up into Piccadilly. Visitors by the thousand will crawl into Cézanne, and crawl out again exhausted, apparently purged to face the world.

The art blockbuster seems to leave everyone better off. It takes paintings, which cost little to create, and adds huge value to them. Among the cognoscenti, the critics praise the art and sneer at the masses in the queue. Conservatives sneer at the art and sneer at the queues as well. Artists keep their counsel, but they too sneer at the queues.

The public disregards them all and enjoys Cézanne. It not only looks at the paintings but buys Cézanne videos, Cézanne cookbooks, Cézanne mugs, Cézanne diaries and Cézanne CD-Roms. People can paint their own Cézanne by computer. They can sign up for Cézanne tours of Aix. On television they can watch poets and painters trotting up Mont Ste-Victoire to handle Cézanne's sacred rocks. The catalogue is so vast as to be unusable in the exhibition and unreadable in bed. It splits the bottom of its Cézanne plastic bag. Like an illuminated missal it is best kept chained to a lectern. (But then it is a modern illuminated missal).

At the opening banquet, guests met real-life Cézanne descendants. They pretended they were at Le Tholonet and ate subterfuge with goat's cheese and tapenade, followed by lamb with ragout of fennel, red pepper and olives. They sipped Côtes de Provence, marvelled at the Cézanne table settings and praised Ernst & Young for its sponsorship. The less fortunate could eat "Cézanneiches" at Pret A Manger and buy Cézanne scarves at Harvey Nichols. The Cézanne family continues to take a cut by endorsing the souvenirs.

Critics like to ask what Cézanne would have made of it all. A paradox is declared between the grandeur of the blockbuster and the historic struggle of its poor, neglected instigator. From this paradox a judgement is engineered. That there is something obscene about the rich winning and dining, wheeling and dealing over the grave of a humble artist. His name should not be associated with retail products nor the

public induced to part with £7 at his door. We should all stand before him in hairshirts. A BBC radio discussion this week declared collective horror at the commercialisation of Cézanne. A man from the ICA registered a formal protest. A writer in *The Independent* concluded that, had he known of the Tate success, Cézanne would have stayed at home.

I don't believe it. Cézanne was famously eager for recognition. A tetchy misanthrope who inherited family money and was never poor, he longed to hang in a museum and be appreciated by many. His life was uneventful and uninteresting and his reclusive nature left others to interpret his work. His 20 artistic principles, set out for the artist Emile Bernard (who thought him divine), are mostly banalities about nature and colour. From what little we know of him, had he heard that thousands were lining the streets of Paris, London and Philadelphia in his honour, he would have been amazed, delighted and rather smug.

The modern blockbuster is wholly justified. It offers the museum the opportunity to throw open its doors and admit the public to its cultural sanctuary. By exploiting the media's love of a personality and an event, the Tate Gallery can transmit its message to a new audience. That Cézanne, an aloof and not easily accessible talent, should be the artist to break records is astonishing. Perhaps there is hope that contemporary art might return to its professed roots in his work, and start the 20th century over again.

Such shows encourage us to concentrate on one message, to learn and to enjoy. At the Tate, the message is that "painting after nature is not copying the objective, it is realising our sensations". To this end, wrote Cézanne, "there are no lines, no modelling, there are only contrasts produced by colour". A one-man show is like a difficult symphony, the more attention we pay it the more we are likely to appreciate.

Nor does the hyperbole get in the way. The fragment of Cézanne I glimpsed on the side of a shopping bag brought his art to life more than a dozen pictures. The movement of a television lens across a canvas captured the quality of his brushwork better than the naked eye. Cézanne might have been shocked at the distortion of his colours in ceramic, fabric and plastic reproduction, but even these help to attune the vision and draw us back to the original.

My one quarrel with the Tate show is its lighting. I saw the exhibition in Paris, where the light was different. In London the pictures are hung on bright walls, as if on a bleached Provencal hill. The light battles with the colours and can make them dull. Many of the pictures seem to shrink into their frames as if suffering agoraphobia amid the dazzle. The nudes look



Cézanne's *Self Portrait in a White Cap*, 1881-82, part of the exhibition at the Tate Gallery, London, which has spawned an array of merchandise

peculiarly naked. This may suit the greens and browns of the landscapes and the shifting shades of Mont Ste-Victoire.

These pictures look better in London. In Paris the walls were darker, some very dark indeed. Light was concentrated on the canvases and here the colours glowed from within, like stained glass. The effect was wholly different. This particularly transformed the portraits. Spatial in shadow, sad, introspective, often sombre, they drew the viewer into a private conversation between Cézanne and his subject. The central octagon in the Paris show, containing the *Woman with the Rosary*, the *Man with Crossed Arms* and the portrait of Ambroise Vollard, gave Cézanne's faces the intensity of Rembrandt.

Visiting these vast shows, I realise that the modern museum has become a secular cathedral. Its special exhibitions are sacramental rituals, festivals of joy in art but also pilgrimages of grace. Art galleries are magnets not just of nations but of whole continents. Like medieval shrines, they are huge economic generators. A survey of the 1992 Matisse show

in New York found that 70 per cent of out-of-town visitors came specifically to see it, spending an average of £300 in the city. The Metropolitan Museum is now New York's biggest tourist attraction.

Cézanne's art might seem introverted and his subject matter distant, repetitive and even dull. But then so was the teaching of the mystics and the rituals of the medieval Church. Millions travelled to Vézelay, Canterbury and Santiago from all over Europe — enduring worse conditions than the Victoria Line southbound. Cézanne's paintings are removed from their contexts, miles from Provence, pinned to blank walls in lofty rooms. They are detached icons, mostly glimpsed beyond a silhouette of moving heads and shoulders. For many of the crowds that flock to them they must seem unreal.

Yet half a million people will visit Cézanne by the end of April. The power of the exhibition, the power of pilgrimage and congregation, cannot be denied. I must assume that these exhibitions offer us absolution for our aesthetic sins. The blockbuster has become the leading cultural ceremony of the age.

Don't call us

AN ESCORT agency has been doing a roaring trade courtesy of the American embassy in London. Its number has inadvertently appeared on visa application forms.

Instead of the sympathetic tones of an American official, the number on hundreds of forms distributed by the US Embassy is answered by a lady's inviting voice on a recorded message. "Hi, and thanks for calling Let's Talk," she says. "The service that puts you in touch with

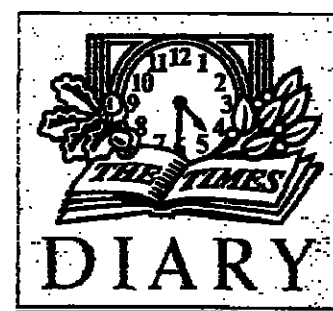
your kind of people." The tape then invites its callers to leave a personal communication on its "message exchange service for adults only".

After making my excuses, I telephoned the Embassy's main switchboard — no sweet invitations there. "Nobody knew that a typographical error had been made," snarled a spokesman. "I believe it's called the Rex Escort agency. It was printed on forms for people who are seeking temporary work visas. I can say that it only affected two or three people a day."

The US Ambassador, Admiral William Crowe, remains unaware of the diversion. But one applicant for a temporary work permit was taken aback. "I asked my wife to make the call to the Embassy — and she's beginning to wonder what kind of work I'm after."

Foreign body

POP MUSIC promoters are grappling with a new concept — that of nationality. They have been trying to suggest that Björk, an elfin doll from Iceland, is in fact British. The



feeble attempt comes as a result of BBC Radio 1's plans this month for a British Music Week in which only British bands will be aired.

Björk's promoters stake their claim on the fact that she has paid British taxes and her child was born in Britain. Tina Turner's record company has also claimed British citizenship for its big-haired singer. Radio 1's reply to Björk's people was succinct and made three points: "1 She's not British. 2 Er... 3 That's it."

Back pay

A TALE of Byzantine complexity unfolds in the Irish Republic concerning the country's tax commissioners. Eight years ago the commissioners hired a Dublin

public relations firm, Murray Consultants, to advise them on the campaign to introduce the self-assessment of income tax and in 1988 the scheme was launched.

Unhappily, three directors of the firm were uncovered this month as participants in an elaborate scheme to minimise tax liabilities involving a Panamanian-registered company. The Revenue paid its PR company \$88,000 for advice. But the three directors have been obliged to pay £1 million in back taxes to the Revenue.



Milton Shulman: a lost voice

George Bush, the former US President, arrived late, damp and dishevelled for lunch yesterday at the Banqueting House in Whitehall. Rather than risk road rage, he had jumped out of his chauffeur-driven car and walked to avoid the jams. He said it was a mile in the rain: others estimated 100 yards.

Critical shot

STAFF AT the London Evening Standard are more nervous than ever. Max Hastings, the gun-toting Editor who took over the helm of the local tabloid last month, delivered a most brutal blow yesterday when he asked the veteran columnist Milton Shulman to leave after almost half a century on the paper.

Shulman joined as film critic in 1948 and has written on a wide range of subjects. He became well-known outside London for his regular appearances on Radio 4's *Stop The Week*. "I have been there 48 years so it came as quite a shock," says Shulman, who received the news in a letter yesterday. "I was told there was no place for my column in the new make-up of the paper." Next Friday's weekly column is expected to be his last. His piece yesterday, about obituaries,



The Duke of Devonshire and his model granddaughter, Stella

featured a cartoon of the great man sitting in a coffin.

Being a Goon fan, the Prince of Wales must be disappointed not to have had time during his visit to Dubrovnik to look up his relations in the area. Through his great-grandmother, Queen Mary, he is descended from one Hermann I, Count of Cilly (pronounced "silly").

Little lamb

SUPERMODELS are famous for their tantrums and their time-keeping ability — or the lack of it. But Stella Tennant, the new face of Chanel, is a girl made of sterner

stuff than some of her dipper colleagues.

Her grandmother, the luminous Duchess of Devonshire, offers a revealing comment on her statuesque descendant and suggests in the latest issue of *Vogue* that she should be in the lambing sheds, rather than on the catwalk. "She's so good at lambing," insists Her Grace. "Stella would help in the lambing sheds even when she was a little girl. She was always very good with animals." Stella's modelling days aren't over yet. However, Chatsworth is festooned with modish pictures of the new supermodel.



SHROUDED IN MYTHS

Europe prefers tall tales to straight-talking

Rational debate about the future of the European Union is bedevilled by the small print and the big idea. The European Commission may produce acres of close-printed paper, but, amid all the detail, fact and myth sit uneasily side by side.

Some of those myths make it easy to caricature Brussels as a bureaucratic monster. But others threaten Europe's very peace and security. Sceptics are often attacked for reducing the future of Europe to a straight banana or a dirty oyster. But the case for co-operation among the nation states of Europe is in greater danger from the folly of pocket statesmen than the ridicule of over-eager sceptics. The myths that do real damage to Europe are the dreams of its over-ambitious politicians. In an occasional series of leading articles — which starts today — *The Times* sets out to skewer the most pernicious.

Supporters of the Commission have some right to feel aggrieved at the speed with which the most tendentious interpretation of a tentatively-tabled directive is presented as an imminent threat to the British way of life. The willingness of the British press and public to believe that trawlermen could not put to sea without a case of contraceptives on board or exhausted oysters needed regular showers on their way to the shops has infuriated apologists for integration. By the time officials had clarified matters the damage was done and another myth had taken root.

Yet the myths would not have flourished unless there had been fertile soil. The tendency of the Commission to intrude, in Douglas Hurd's words "into the nooks and crannies of national life", with regulations on everything from abattoirs to metrization, creates a climate where the public are willing to believe the latest myth. The press and politicians would not be believed if they invented scare stories that did not chime with experience. The fictional condoms and flagging oysters are really the Commission's allies, a warning not to overreach oneself.

The myths that matter more are the false assumptions and shallow arguments that

underpin the drive to integration. Europe's institutions are being shaped by politicians whose rhetoric makes the case for douching shellfish seem reasonable. There are three main families of myths deployed in place of reason when Europe's future is explored.

The first are the "slow slide" fallacies, which hold that co-operation should lead eventually to convergence and then to conformity. It is the rationale for the myth that a single market needs a single currency, and the "social dimension" in Europe should see labour costs harmonised between Stockholm and Salonika.

The second are the trivial travel metaphors, used to drive an argument to a conclusion before a consensus can be reached. We are told Europe is like a bicycle, which must move forward or fall. It is also like a train, and Britain must be in the driving seat or risk relegation to the second tier. As Peter Lilley remarked, the only thing the EU has in common with a train is that once you're in, food suddenly becomes much more expensive. At its most outrageous, the move-or-perish case finds expression in those who prophesy war unless momentum is maintained towards the pre-determined goal.

The third are the mandarin pieties used by those who prefer diplomacy to democracy. Sovereignty, it is suggested, is an outdated concept. In the next breath we are told it should be traded for influence. If it is out-of-date how much influence can it buy a country? Additionally, it is argued, greater clout will be wielded by the EU acting together than any nation acting alone. The advocates of that case might examine with profit the record of EU action in the former Yugoslavia. The EU has proved itself a eunuch abroad. It looks impressive but the increase in size has been bought by losing punch.

There is an intellectually coherent and under-stated case to be made for closer European co-operation. Its merits are obscured by the myth-makers. Over the coming days we will look at examples of their more egregious products.

LATIN POPE

The pontiff travels to a transformed continent

Pope John Paul II is unwell, hoarse of voice, shock-white of hair and untiring. He is now in Latin America, on his 69th tour of duty abroad, and his visit has raised a cloud of questions. Questions are raised whenever he travels, but nowhere else more clamorously than in his new World "heartland".

His focus is not always purely doctrinal: in Latin America, for reasons to do with the secular local history of the Roman Catholic Church, papal visits have always been intensely political. The Pope is not there a neutral figure, and is claimed by all sides of the political debate, often in competition. Yet on this visit, more acutely than on any previous one, he has faced a new and daunting question: how to arrest the decline in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. His Church was once the most dynamic in the area: the continent was conquered in the name of Iberian kings and Rome, and Popes or long provided the spiritual cement for an impressive, if cruel, imperial edifice. But while the Church's role in politics has been guaranteed since Christopher Columbus, its decline has quickened in recent decades. There are reasons for this, of course, only some of which should worry the Pope.

The most important is the sharp improvement in the quality of Latin American government. With the exception of Cuba, there is now no Latin American country that is not in harmony with some kind of democratic form. Take but three of the Central American countries to which he has travelled on this visit — El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. Each one has

had recently, or is about to conduct, a free and fair election: and they are all part of a hemisphere-wide phenomenon. The democratisation of politics — and its attendant economic benefits — have succeeded in reducing the allure for many of the more combative "liberation theology".

While liberation theologians were always in conflict with the Catholic Establishment — and under Pope John Paul II, this conflict has always been clearly pronounced — their Catholic identity has never been open to question. They were the "wayward" sons, whose return to the fold was always thought to be a matter of time and political change.

Freer politics and the remarkable, continent-wide decline in human rights abuses have, on the whole, sharpened the divide between Church and politics: the "disadvantaged" no longer look to radical priests for succour, and the "advantaged" no longer rely on the clerical establishment for a flavour of legitimacy.

This ebbing away of politics from religion, however, has served to open the way for other, charismatic "Protestant" sects to make inroads in populations which were once the preserve of Rome. Roman Catholicism, which was once the fastest-growing religion in Latin America, is now the fastest-shrinking faith. Only by returning to its true pastoral business can the Catholic Church face its sprightly new competitors. That is a point which the Pope, in spite of his fatigue and ill-health, will have impressed on his hosts with force: drop the partisan politics for the sake of the Church.

TWITCHY HABITS

A Russian waxwing writes home from his English holiday

Thousands of bird-watchers are flocking to the Robinswood Hill Country Park in Gloucester, twitchy for the first glimpse of the Siberian waxwing, *Bombicilla garrulus*, driven southwest from its usual habitat by the cold snap. A waxwing writes:

In recent man-watching, nothing has been more remarkable than the evolution of the twitcher, *Homio avicollector*, from a solitary human to one that swarms. Even its plumage has changed with its habits. Once identifiable by its shabby camouflage anorak and woolly hat, its socialisation has reclothed it in designer waterproofs in many colours. But its feet remain wellies, usually green. And although they have grown larger, its eye-markings by high-power camera telescopes and binoculars are unmistakable. The female is still less sociable and more sombrely clad than the male.

Identification: 66" (168cm). Plumage mainly tanpinks in greens and dull browns. Travelling outline action recalls the antique Trainspotter, *Homio nerdistissimus*, though it is more volatile. Feeding habits (sandwiches, Tupperware, Thermos) suggesting the Scout or the Rambler. Voice: Trilling of a mobile phone. Come quick, come quick. Habitat: Parks and other public spaces when rumours of rare birds spread. I envy my friend Ivan, who along with 10,000 other waxwings has been driven by the cold to parts of Britain unvisited by twitchers.

Twitchers are enthusiasts who will hire helicopters to travel hundreds of miles in order to collect sightings of rare birds, as

though they were stamps. Like out-of-context philatelists, they become so lost in twitching that they refuse to snap any creature other than shipwrecked birds. As such, they can be as destructive as pigeons. A five-alarm twitch for a Houbara bustard in East Anglia devastated a farmer's crops into bankruptcy. Twitchers pursued an American Thrasher into a lavatory in the Isles of Scilly, where it drowned. Twitchers stared solemnly for 24 hours at a night heron on a Midlands marsh. It turned out to be a taxidermist's heron stuck up the tree by a rogue. Too often Twitchers have stood by as audience while their *rara avis* has been eaten by a less sexy hawk or owl.

Gilbert White, twitching curate of Selborne, started the Twitcher habit of feeding the pigeons otherwise than to the cat. When the first field guides were published a generation ago, the membership of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds was 7,000. Since then it has increased by a hundredfold, and is now larger than the membership of the Conservative Party. Britain's champion Twitcher has more than 502 species logged in his notebook, and is confident of adding to the number today.

As a northern waxwing in these cold days, I should prefer a less zealous habitat than this weekend convocation of Twitchers. I should rather be with Ivan and Serge. But at least Twitchers do not shoot us birds, except with their camcorders. As the careful biologists say, Twitchers may not be a good thing, but they are not bad either.

Scottish views on state of the Union

From the Secretary of the Campaign for a Scottish Parliament

Sir, Your leader of February 8, "Blair's constitutional", makes much of the so-called "West Lothian question" where, by in certain circumstances, if Scotland had democratic control over legislation for its own health, education and legal system, 72 Scottish MPs could still vote in Westminster on Bills connected with English health, education and law.

The occasions when the handful of Scottish votes could make a difference are obviously confined to those on which the English themselves are fairly evenly divided on a matter relating to England but not Scotland. Moreover, the Scots do have an interest, since it is the state of affairs in England which always seems to drive Cabinet policy decisions, often with knock-on effects upon the whole UK.

On the other hand, week by week, and year by year the Scottish MPs, even if all 72 of them are in agreement, are regularly outvoted on matters applying only to Scotland by 500 English MPs, most of whom have little or no knowledge of Scottish law, health, education, or the values and attitudes of the Scots. They have no conceivable mandate from their English constituents to interfere with our systems. What sort of "democracy" is this? It is not the "West Lothian question" which is a democratic scandal, but the "Westminster question".

The Conservative "defence of the Union" looks more likely to drive the Scots into opting for full independence than persuading them to accept the unsatisfactory status quo.

If English voters want to support a continuing United Kingdom they should support the parties promoting a Scottish parliament, as proposed by the Scottish Constitutional Convention, the Liberal Democrats and the new Labour Party.

Yours sincerely,
MARION RALLS, Secretary,
Campaign for a Scottish Parliament,
22 Royal Circus,
The New Town, Edinburgh.
February 8.

From Mr Alan Beith, MP for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Liberal Democrat)

Sir, Lord Mackay of Clashfern ("A house devolved against itself", February 7) persists in believing that the constitution could not survive the possibility of Scottish MPs being able to ask questions at Westminster about matters in England which, in Scotland, would be devolved.

I do not recall any word of objection from him when the Prime Minister put forward the possibility of a Northern Ireland Assembly with devolved powers, which would leave Northern Ireland MPs at Westminster in exactly the same position. Nor, indeed, do I recall any word of objection from Conservatives and Unionists when this situation existed prior to the abolition of the Northern Ireland Parliament.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN BEITH,
House of Commons.
February 7.

Curriculum tests

From Mr David Hawker

Sir, Mr Bruns (letter, February 1) expresses a common misconception about the results of national school tests.

He rightly points out that the tests are based on what an average 11-year-old should be able to achieve, but wrongly draws the conclusion that only 50 per cent should be expected to meet the standard for Level 4 in the national curriculum.

Level 4 is an expectation of achievement, not an average. In fact, if children are performing up to expectations we should see a substantial majority of 11-year-olds performing at this level or above.

Since the standard for Level 4 is fixed, the test results in future years will show the extent to which children's levels of attainment are improving. The tests at seven are already doing this.

Far from being too easy, they show simply that children's performance has improved in certain areas since the tests were introduced in 1991.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID HAWKER
(Assistant Chief Executive,
Statutory Assessment, S-14),
School Curriculum and
Assessment Authority,
Newcombe House,
45 Notting Hill Gate, W11.
February 7.

Retirement villages

From Dame Alison Munro and Dr C. J. T. Bateman

Sir, Before dismissing the proposal for a "US-style retirement haven" in Essex (report and leading article, January 27), it is a pity you did not take more time to ask why this type of village is so popular in the US and other countries and whether it might not fill a need here.

While most elderly people would prefer to stay in their own homes, many do not have homes or families that would allow for "the other ages" baby-sitting, spectacle-searching and changing the video". If you ask any

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Learning from fire service tragedies

From the President of the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association

Sir, The deaths of four firefighters and a young boy who had been rescued (reports, December 29; February 2, 5) have stunned the fire service and reminds us all of the terrible toll exacted by fire every year. Most of those tragedies, when they affect the public, are in the home.

Anyone who has read the Book of Remembrance in the Fire Service Chapel at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire, cannot but feel pride in the dedication to duty shown by every person named and a desire to ensure that those who risk all are well supported. This is especially true of our retained (part-time) firefighters, who provide cover and willingly give up their often limited leisure time to serve their communities. They also fought many of the fires during last year's long, dry summer alongside their whole-time colleagues.

Some, like Fleur Lombard, the first woman firefighter to die, whose funeral takes place on Tuesday, test themselves and explore the possibility of a full-time career through their retained service. Her enthusiasm again shows that merit and achievement are the real standards to be measured by and that colour or sex are irrelevant.

Others, like Michael Mee, who lost his life when he fell through ice last December while trying to rescue a child in West Yorkshire, show their dedication even when off duty.

We must all provide to achieve greater safety in our homes and in the design of buildings so as to ensure

that any lessons learnt are translated into safety programmes.

In mourning Michael Mee, Kevin Lane, Stephen Griffin and Fleur Lombard we believe their courage and determination should be seen as a shining example of committed public service.

Yours faithfully,
DENNIS DAVIS, President,
The Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers' Association,
10-11 Pebble Close,
Aminington, Tamworth, Staffordshire.
February 9.

From Mr J. E. Richardson

Sir, The death of Fleur Lombard at Leo's supermarket, near Bristol, was tragic, but perhaps avoidable. In this, as with recent fires in other retail buildings at Chichester, Dover, Humberstone and Southampton, part or all of the roof collapsed.

Smoke-control design evolved from horrendous fires experienced in the automotive industry during the 1950s and 1960s. These established that large, unvisited buildings can contain heat until structural collapse occurs. Effective smoke-control systems reduce roof temperature and clearer visibility at floor level enables firefighters to do their job in less punishing conditions, minimising the risk of roof collapse or explosion.

Yours faithfully,
JIM RICHARDSON
(General Manager),
International Fire Technology, Ltd,
New Lane, Havant, Hampshire.
February 5.

Venetian phoenix starts to rise again

From Mrs Marina Atwater di Caporiacco

Sir, Yes, our opera house, La Fenice, will be rebuilt just as it was (leading article, January 31; also letters, February 1 and 3). We want it, the world wants it.

The cost of rebuilding will not be £200 million as you suggest. It will be not more than £50 million, of which £12 million has already been pledged by Assicurazioni Generali — the same company as provided 296,000 Austri- an lire for the first reconstruction of La Fenice in 1836 — if the fire turns out to have been accidental.

My family house shares the walls over the royal staircase on the west side of the theatre with La Fenice. We were evacuated from it, and although we shall not be able to return for at least three weeks while the remaining walls of the theatre are strengthened, we can only praise the courage and skill of the firemen in saving all the surrounding buildings.

The destruction could have been much worse. On the night of the fire, the wind seemed to blow the cinders upwards and dropped them on the is-

lands of Giudecca and S. Giorgio. We Venetians were lucky in our misfortune, and are treating it as the greatest challenge. There will be no interminable hearings or committee meetings or the usual compromises. This time, with the mayor of Venice, Massimo Cacciari, as a wise and benevolent dictator and supported by a presidential decree, we shall do things the way of the Habsburgs, who knew a thing or two about getting things done. In 1836 it took one year to rebuild La Fenice, although it is true that on that occasion the atrium and the Salle Apolline had not been touched by fire. In 1977 the Palazzo Ducale took 25 years to rebuild; and over 60 years went by before the stone bridge at the Rialto was built at the end of the 16th century, after the last wooden bridge had collapsed.

But for us the reconstruction has begun, and already the scaffolding is now going up.

Sincerely,
M. ATWATER DI CAPORIACCO,
Palazzo Molin,
S. Marco 1981, Venice.
February 6.

Off the rails

From Mr M. B. Warburton

Sir, The little steam engine in your front-page cartoon (February 5) need not worry: new Great Western trains don't go anywhere near Yeovil.

Even if it had been a South West train it would still be two miles from the town at Yeovil Junction.

Yours faithfully,
MARK B. WARBURTON,
10 Brayne Court,
Longwell Green,
Bristol, Avon.
February 5.

Tornado crash

From Air Commodore G. L. McRobbie

Sir, Contrary to your report ("Rethink on RAF swaps after crash", February 5), we would like to make clear that the RAF is not reviewing its exchange posting scheme.

The Tornado which crashed near Munster in Germany last month did not suffer a "minor instrument failure", nor did its Italian pilot order or initiate the ejection sequence.

The RAF respects the ability of our Italian aircrew colleagues every bit as much as we respect the abilities of our other Nato partners. All allied air forces strive hard to achieve good flight safety standards.

Yours sincerely,
GORDON MCROBBIE
(Director of Public Relations (RAF)),
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Whitehall, SW1.
February 6.

group of elderly what they dread most in old age they are likely to say "being a burden to their families". They also dread being isolated and lonely when they lose their mobility. This is particularly distressing when couples become separated when one is removed to a home. To all this must be added the financial worries of old age.

With the aid of a charitable medical trust we hope to obtain planning per-

Alarming power

From Mr Peter Stonebridge

Sir, I read with great interest your report (February 6) on drivers with high-tech alarms being locked out of their cars by up to 100 watts of radio frequency power from some unsuspecting radio amateur.

I can do better than that. I can set off my high-tech car intruder alarm simply by using my satellite TV controller.

You are correct in reporting little interest in this matter in the motor trade. I am struggling to get anyone interested apart, that is, from my suffering neighbours, who know precisely when I fire of terrestrial TV programmes.

Yours faithfully,
PETER STONEBRIDGE,
Bridge House,
207 Henley Road, Ipswich, Suffolk.

Car lights in daytime

From Mr Hugo Griffin-Jorgensen

Sir, "Dull month increases accidents" is the gist of your report (February 1) on January's weather. This shows that it would be appropriate for Britain to adopt the Nordic idea, that all vehicles use daylight driving lights (min. 21 watt) and in the absence of these use headlights at all times.

This has been law in Scandinavia and Finland for several years now and has led to a cut in the daytime accident rate of up to 4 per cent.

Yours sincerely,
HUGO GRIFFIN-JORGENSEN,
19 Harrow Road,
Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire.
February 4.

First impressions of Tate's Cézannes

From Sir Hugh Leggatt

Sir, The attention being given to the Cézanne exhibition at the Tate (reports and leading article, February 5) should remind us that up and down the country there are many local authority and university museums which, more often than not, are unable to afford a special loan exhibition of works of art.

For a modest outlay of £5 million a year, perhaps funded from the proceeds of the National Lottery, an important number of such exhibitions could be held throughout the UK.

The scheme could possibly be administered by the Museums and Galleries Commission and the annual subvention to any one institution limited to say £50,000.

Yours faithfully,
HUGH LEGGATT,
East 1, 10 Bury Street,
St James's, SW1.
February 9.

From Mr Nick McDowell

Sir, The Cézanne show which I visited yesterday was ruined for me by what seems like a logistical absurdity. Cézanne painted figures, still-lives, bathers, views of Mont Sainte-Victoire throughout his life. The chief interest for me in seeing a body of his work is in assessing the ways in which his treatment of these subjects changed during his life.

Due, doubtless, to the constraints imposed by the ubiquitous personal stereotypes which provide a spoken tour through the exhibition by strict chronology, any opportunity of viewing, contiguously, bathing scenes (for example) from the early, middle and late periods has been sacrificed. Only by sprinting from room to room, endangering the hordes of students sitting on the floor sketching and myself, was I able to make comparisons between the bathers of each period.

What we need is a bathers room, a Mont Sainte-Victoire room, a still-lives room and two rooms of portraits. Then Cézanne's modernism will be clear to students, sprinters and stereo-carriers alike. Take the pictures down, I say, and try again.

I am, Sir, your faithfully,
NICK MCDOWELL,
The White Lodge, 55 Grove Park, SES.
February 8.

From Sir Kit McMahon

Sir, It may be that, as Thomas Stuttaford suggests (Medical briefing, February 9), the laxative properties which apples were widely perceived to possess incited Cézanne to paint them so often (though this explanation would leave open the question why all other 19th-century still-lives were not also filled with apples).

As it happens, however, the painter himself gave another explanation, saying with a smile, late in life, "You know Cézanne's apples have their origin in a very distant past".

When he was at school in Aix, Emile Zola was also a pupil. Although the same age as Cézanne, he was placed two classes lower, and for this, together with his shyness, shortsightedness, bad accent, poverty and fatherlessness, was unmercifully bullied.

Cézanne took his part, befriending him, and as a result, was on one occasion himself beaten by the other boys. Emile was touched by this and the next day brought his friend Paul a large basket of apples (Henri Perruchot, *Cézanne*, translated by Humphrey Hare, Perpetua Books, 1961).

Yours faithfully,
KIT MCMAHON,
The Old House,
Burleigh Lane, Minchinhampton,
Nr Stroud, Gloucestershire.
February 9.

Bothered by bells

From Mr E. W. Houghton

Sir, Good news for those reportedly unfortunate people of Maidstone, Kent, who, according to your report (January 31, early editions), feel aggrieved that they live within earshot of the bells of All Saints. They can count their blessings.

If they really had to listen to every possible change on the bells (described in your report as "rings"), the 3,628,800 changes theoretically available on this ring of ten bells would take 720 times as long as the 34 hours your reporter tells us is needed to complete the set, which, using the same basis of calculation, would be roughly 108 days.

Yours faithfully,
E. W. HOUGHTON,
42 Chesterfield Crescent, Wing,
Nr Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire.
February 1.

Levelling the field

From Mr David G. Davies

Sir, The Prime Minister frequently professes his admiration for our national summer game.

I hope therefore that he would regard the behaviour of a side batting first for eight days, then giving the opposition six hours in which to reply (leading article, "Great Scott", February 7), to be "not cricket".

Yours faithfully,
D. G. DAVIES,
41 Park Crescent,
Elstree, Hertfordshire.
February 9.

هناك من النحل

OBITUARIES

MAJOR-GENERAL 'BILL' LIARDET

Major-General 'Bill' Liardet, CB, CBE, DSO, Deputy Master General of the Ordnance, 1961-64, died on February 8 aged 89. He was born on October 27, 1906.

BILL LIARDET's long career as a tank warfare specialist included command of the 6th Royal Tank Regiment during the final disastrous retreat of the desert campaign in North Africa that preceded the turn of the tide at El Alamein.

Field Marshal Rommel and the Afrika Korps had retaken Cyrenaica during early 1942 and in May were poised west of Gazala and Tobruk. The series of actions that followed, known as the Gazala battles, showed Rommel at his best; the Germans mounting a series of opportunistic, swift right hooks towards Egypt and the Suez Canal, groping deep for the Eighth Army's lines of communication. They obtained much benefit from their superior and more flexible use of armour, their Panzer divisions being integrated with a high proportion of artillery and motorised infantry.

The Eighth Army under General Ritchie was initially surprised and suffered severe losses. Liardet's regiment, equipped with the new American-made Grant tank, and part of the 4th Armoured Brigade within the 1st Armoured Division, was, at the end of May, positioned centrally near the fortified 'box' known as Knightsbridge. Early on May 27 the 4th Armoured Brigade was caught by the 15th Panzer Division while still readying itself for a move and, although the heavy Grants, in battle for the first time, shook the German tank crews, there were many losses. In conditions of chaos, the Eighth Army subsequently fought a series of rearguard actions, falling back some 300 miles along the North African coast.

Throughout June, Liardet's regiment lost about half its Grant tanks. One of his soldiers recalls long days of exhausting action and short nights with tanks in 'leaguer' or on the move, and his colonel each night meticulously visiting everybody to see how they were doing.

Tobruk fell on June 21. On June 25 General Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief, himself relieved Ritchie as army commander and, with a quality of generalship acknowledged by Rommel, held and repulsed the German advance among the ridges near El Alamein. The 6th RTR's laconic battle narrative for these first five days in July sounds a much more cheerful note: 'successful shoot and push forward', 'held the ridge'.

But on July 5, Liardet was relieved of his command following a row that arose from his strong criticism of the way that the 4th Armoured Brigade



had been handled. His subsequent appointment as GSO 1, or chief staff officer, to Major-General Alec Gatehouse in command of the newly formed 10th Armoured Division clearly vindicated his professionalism and tactical expertise. Gatehouse was the first career RTR officer to command an armoured division and it was his able and canny handling of tanks and artillery that made a marked contribution to the success of the crucial battles of Alam Halfa and Alamein.

After Alamein, Liardet was reappointed in command of a refitted 6th RTR and redeployed to Iraq and Syria.

Promoted colonel in January 1944, he took command of the Armoured Reinforcement Group in the Italian campaign, supplying fresh tanks to forward formations. When second-in-

command of the 25th Armoured Engineer Brigade, he was awarded the DSO for his key part in a difficult assault over the River Seno in May 1945. Later, when in command of the same formation, he was twice mentioned in dispatches.

Henry Maughan Liardet — always known as Bill — was the fifth generation of a family of military men with strong Indian connections. His father, Major-General Sir Claude Liardet, KBE, CB, DSO, a First World War artilleryman, uniquely commanded a division as a Territorial officer and was the founding commander of the Royal Air Force Regiment.

Rejecting a career in his father's footsteps as a Lloyd's broker, Liardet joined the Royal Tank Corps in 1927. His early service, in Rolls-Royce

armoured cars on the North West Frontier of an unpartitioned India, was especially happy: he was able to get married, move a useful jockey over the sticks at Quetta races and enjoy shikhar. His wife Joan used to recall her terror, while pregnant, at being freed by a wounded buffalo.

During the Abyssinian crisis he was sent to Egypt on the staff of the Mobile Force (known locally as the 'immobile force'), returning to pass through the Staff College at the outbreak of war. This was followed by two years in the War Office working on the organisation of the Armoured Corps under the up-and-coming General Sir Vyvyan Pope. Pope took Liardet to the Middle East but was killed in an air crash and Liardet found himself on the staff of GHQ Cairo until appointed to his regimental command.

He ended the war as an acting brigadier in command of a tank brigade occupying Venezia Giulia and confronting Tito's threats to Trieste in northern Italy, followed by tours in Palestine and Egypt. Although he was appointed CBE in 1945, the postwar contraction of the Army caused a reduction in his rank. As a substantive lieutenant-colonel in 1949 he commanded the 8th RTR at Caterick, leading the regiment to a particularly fine sporting record.

Regaining brigadier's rank in 1951, he held a number of headquarters and command posts until 1956 when he became chief of staff of the British Joint Services Mission in Washington. Promoted major-general, he was Director-General of Armoured Fighting Vehicles and subsequently Deputy Master General of the Ordnance, attending the last meeting of the Army Council before Mountbatten's centralising reforms of the Ministry of Defence abolished that body.

Retiring in 1964, he was appointed CB and devoted his time to local affairs, becoming a county councillor for West Sussex and an alderman in 1970. He was a director of the British Sailors' Society for 17 years and participated in a number of service charities.

He maintained his regimental connections with enthusiasm, having been Colonel Commandant of the Royal Tank Regiment from 1961 until 1967, the 50th anniversary of the first use of the tank at Cambrai, an occasion marked by the presence of the Queen at a parade in Germany.

A man who inspired great loyalty, he was often visited by old soldiers of all ranks who had served with him, even up to the year of his death. In 1933 he married Joan Constable, who died in 1991. He is survived by his second wife Barbara and the three sons of the first marriage.

ANTONIO

Antonio Ruiz Soler, Spanish flamenco dancer, died in Madrid on February 5 aged 74. He was born in Seville on November 4, 1921.



KNOWN simply as Antonio to a nation who adored him, Antonio Ruiz Soler danced for coins on the streets of Seville at the age of four. He claimed publicly — with never a hint of denial from the ladies concerned — to have been the lover of Ava Gardner, Gina Lollobrigida, Lola Flores and the Duchess of Alba. He was once thrown in jail for blaspheming while being filmed for television. He died in a state of virtual paralysis.

During his career as a flamenco bailarín, he revived much that was moribund, wrought a revolution in style and approach, took his country's flamboyant dance to most corners of the globe and cultivated a strutting-conceit that appeared always to fortify his exuberance.

He was born in Seville — the cradle of flamenco — to an utterly penniless family. Its poverty was due, in greatest measure, to the thirst for strong drink which raged within Antonio's father.

Yet in this squalid milieu, young Antonio found from somewhere — and at an age when most children are content simply to walk — the *duende*, or spirit, that fuels the best flamenco. He started at the age of three, his hagiographers say, to adopt postures, little postures, which often enraged his drunken father. By four he had befriended a rough hurdy-gurdy man called Juan, and together they performed — Juan on his organ, little Antonio with his dance — to a shower of money on the backstreets of Seville.

His talent was so nakedly apparent that an aunt, Ana, paid for him to take dance classes at the school of Realito, a local maestro. Later, when Ana could no longer afford these, Realito, by now convinced that his pupil was a treasure, waived his fees altogether.

At the age of seven Antonio gave his first formal public performance in Liège, Belgium, with a young girl, Rosario. Called *Los Chavals*

illos Sevillanos — The Kids from Seville — they performed also, in the following year, at the Seville Exposition.

Antonio and Rosario were to dance as a pair for the next 24 years. She played graceful second fiddle to his frankly masculine style, which often crossed the boundary into shameless narcissism. Before Antonio's conquest of flamenco's imperium, outstanding soloists had tended to be women. He was to change all that: it was now the man who was the real star, *estirao y enfadado*, or 'stuck-up and angry'.

Antonio was inventive — often astonishingly so — and is credited with being the father of the *martinete*, a form of hammer-like stamping. It was in the film by Edgar Neville, called *Duende y misterio del flamenco* (1952), that Antonio performed the *martinete* for the first time, beneath the Arco del Tajo in Ronda.

Antonio and Rosario parted

company that same year, and the *bailarin* began, 'increasingly, to turn to choreography. By the 1960s, he was to ensure that flamenco developed a ballet style, in addition to its traditional small-stage individualism. Aficionados today are as familiar with Antonio's versions of de Falla's *Love the Magician* and *The Three-Cornered Hat* as they are with his haunting *martinete*.

Spain's dictator, General Franco, who for political reasons promoted flamenco and folklore, once pronounced Antonio as both his favourite *bailarin* and as an 'authentic Spaniard'. In 1973 Antonio had reason to be thankful for the General's admiration. Only Franco's personal intervention secured his release when, having blasphemed violently in an angry moment during the filming of *The Three-Cornered Hat*, he was hauled without ceremony off to jail.

He remained a bachelor.

SIR THOMAS PADMORE

Sir Thomas Padmore, GCB, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Transport, 1962-68, died on February 8 aged 80. He was born on April 23, 1909.

THOMAS PADMORE was a high-ranking civil servant who worked in the Treasury for thirty years, latterly as Second Secretary, before being appointed Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Transport, 1962-68. He combined many of the virtues of the model civil servant — discreet, capable and politically neutral. Politicians he regarded with a dispassionate eye and only once did he

appear ruffled by a difficult working relationship with a minister — Barbara Castle at the Ministry of Transport. It was unfortunate that his distinguished career should have ended, soon afterwards, on such an untypically discordant note.

Though one would never have guessed it from his accentless English, Thomas Padmore was a Yorkshireman, born in Sheffield, the son of a self-made businessman. He was educated at the Sheffield Central School and, as a scholar, at Queens' College, Cambridge (of which he was made an honorary fellow in 1961), where he read French and German.

He joined the Civil Service in 1931 and, after a couple of years in the Inland Revenue, he was transferred to the Treasury, where his advance was rapid. He had a quick brain, allied to a strong dose of Yorkshireman's common sense, and he was friendly and likeable in person. He was excellent both as an administrator and, for two years, 1943-45, as Principal Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In 1951 his future seemed mapped out: he had been designated to succeed as Secretary to the Cabinet, then, as now, a key job. Much against his will, this was announced some months in advance.

When the time came, however, there was a new Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and the series of moves which were to lead to a vacancy at the Cabinet Office were cancelled. Instead Padmore stayed at the Treasury. In 1952 he was promoted to Second Secretary. It seemed to his friends that he ought to have been moved out to some other department after this change of events. But he was the essential number two at the Treasury and so was kept there for more than ten years, in charge of establishments — personnel and staff management — and then of finance and supply. Successive Chancellors held out hopes of promotion to the

top job; but they moved on, and the promotion went elsewhere. These years were increasingly frustrating ones for Padmore, and they were marred by personal sadness: the protracted, painful and ultimately fatal illness of his only son from cancer.

In 1962 he was appointed Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Transport. The chance of running a large organisation came to him as a liberation and for some years everything went well. Among other responsibilities, Padmore was involved in the early planning stages of Britain's motorways, the introduction of the 70mph speed limit and in seatbelt legislation, a subject on which he felt very strongly.

At the end of 1965 frustration came to him again, in a manner of which Barbara Castle gives an uninhibited account in her published diaries. According to her, the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, asked her to take over the ministry, with a brief to devise and implement an integrated transport policy. But he warned her that she would find there a very strong Permanent Secretary, who, the Prime Minister was convinced, had killed integration under the previous minister. She decided then and there, though at that point she had never met him, that she must get rid of Padmore. When she did meet him, prejudice hardened into dislike. Things got worse when, a few days later, one of her confidants leaked her intention to *The Guardian*.



ian. Padmore was outraged, and warned her that he would fight.

The battle continued throughout her time at the ministry, since Wilson typically shrank from a confrontation. Padmore won it in the sense that he was still Permanent Secretary when, more than two years later, Barbara Castle was promoted to another department. But it was a pyrrhic victory. His

time under a minister who disliked and mistrusted him was inevitably unhappy. Her successor, to whom she had passed on the torch of her campaign, met with no resistance. Padmore had had enough: he was within a year of the normal retirement age, and he volunteered to retire a few months early, in November 1968.

Through no fault of his own, Padmore's career had not

matched his talents. But he looked forward to enjoying his retirement, and in this he was not disappointed. A central motive was to give more time to music, both as listener and as player. He took up the violin in middle age; he claimed no skill, but it became a real pleasure to him. His experience as an administrator was often called upon but he sensibly rationed the amount of work that he took on. This did not prevent him giving valuable service in the fields of music — he was chairman of the Handel Opera Society, for instance — and medical research.

Once retired from the Civil Service, Padmore felt free to express his own political views. He was dismayed at the prospect of a single European currency, and what he considered to be the stealthy invasion of British life by Brussels bureaucrats, and towards the end of his life he fired off a spate of cogently-argued letters on the subject to newspaper editors. He was a well-read man, and even when he was quite old, he could quote reams of Milton and Shakespeare.

Thomas Padmore was appointed CB in 1947, KCB in 1953 and GCB in 1965. He was twice married: in 1934 to Alice Alcock, who died in 1963, and in 1964 to Rosalind Culhane, LVO, CBE, a former colleague of his in the Treasury, who died last year. Thus, he celebrated two silver wedding anniversaries. He is survived by the two daughters of his first marriage.

PERSONAL COLUMN

SERVICES

ANGLICAN Church economically to cope. Write to Anglican Church of England, 100, Strand, London WC2R 0ET. Tel: 0127 766117, Fax: 0127 766118.

LEGAL NOTICES

NO. 1000 OF 1996 IN THE HIGH COURT

CHANCERY DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF ALVIN P. B. AND IN THE MATTER OF THE CHANCERY ACT 1926

NOTICE is hereby given that the above-named parties have agreed to the following terms of settlement:

1. The parties have agreed to the following terms of settlement:

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TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 1 of the TRUSTEE ACT 1925 that the following is a list of the names of the trustees of the following trusts:

PUBLIC NOTICES

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Fateful day that changed the course of cricket



To the dismay of some, cricket now has a colour supplement

It must seem odd to the great majority of cricketers today that the one-day international came into existence quite by chance. It happened in Melbourne in the first week of 1971, and no uncommon powers of prophecy were needed among those present to foretell that no ordinary score had been planted.

The Melbourne climate is notoriously fickle. Not infrequently, autumn, winter, spring and summer all show up on the same day. On this occasion, the weather over the new year was not so much capricious as relentless. The third Test match between Australia and England was due to be played between December 31, 1970 and January 5, 1971; but England's cricketers are not renowned as rain-makers for nothing.

In Natal recently, they turned a four-year drought into flooding. In Melbourne on that New Year's

Eve, the rain set in just after Bill Lawry and Raymond Illingworth, the captains, had tossed up, and was still beating down three days later. England tours were conducted in those days under the aegis of MCC — this was so from 1903-04 until 1976-77 — and besides David Clark, the manager of the MCC side, there were in Melbourne at the time Sir Cyril Hawker, the president of the club, and Gubby Allen, the treasurer.

Between them, these three, together with Sir Donald Bradman, the chairman of the Australian Cricket Board, and Ray Steele, its treasurer, took what was to prove a momentous decision. They abandoned the Test match on, to be more accurate, postponed it for three weeks (it eventually replaced a four-day match against Victoria and a one-day match against a Victorian Country XI), and declared that, in its place, a one-day



The first limited-overs international had a swift and profound effect on the game. John Woodcock saw it

game of 40 eight-ball overs a side would be played when the skies cleared.

There was the inevitable murmuring among the players, who asked for, and received, a special match fee. England's asked, too, though without conviction or success, for a seventeenth player to be sent for, to help bear the extra workload, which was really more imaginary than real. They were unimpressed, I remember, when told how Lord Harris had re-marked, halfway through his tour of Australia in 1878-79, that he had made a big mistake in taking 12 players. "They are all so keen to play," he said, "that it would have

saved me a lot of bother had I brought only 11."

The propriety of so rejigging MCC's programme in 1970-71 was discounted, rather surprisingly in retrospect, and the temporary fixture, played on what was to have been the last day of the Test match, January 5, is now recognised as the first official one-day international. Being a Tuesday, the caterers at the Melbourne Cricket Ground were advised to allow for a crowd of no more than 20,000. Instead, 46,006 turned up, and nobody doubted it when Bradman told the assembled company that they "could well have seen history made".

Ever since, "instant cricket", as it

was called already in England, has just "grew and grown". It took barely four years for the World Cup to become established. Played in England, the first of them culminated in as thrilling a final, between Australia and West Indies at Lord's in June 1975, as there is ever likely to be. West Indies had a tremendous batting side, with Fredericks, Greenidge, Kalicharran, Kanhai, Lloyd and Richards filling the first six places, while, for Australia, Thomson and Lillee were at their peak. As for the fielding, nobody among a full house at Lord's had ever seen better.

As telegraphic theatre, it was a sure winner, a fact that did not, of course, escape a certain Kerry Packer, the owner of his own television channel, Half Australia, including him for all I know, sat up through the night watching this first final, so that, when the idea of

a travelling circus, involving some of the best players in the world, was put to Packer's Channel Nine, its commercial possibilities were unmistakable. Out came the chequebook, up went the stakes and fierce blew the tempest. The game was never to be the same again.

One of the sporting myths of the 20th century is that when, in 1977, Packer came down "like the wolf on the fold", cricket was in need of him. Internationally, it was in rude health, but then perspectives became blurred. Helmets became standard issue; harmony became discord; traditionalism gave way to razzmatazz, moderation to promiscuity; and one-day cricket was so upgraded that today, in the countries where the sixth World Cup is about to be played, Test cricket is on a life-support machine. Seen in this context, perhaps January 5, 1971 was not so much a momentous occasion as a fateful one.

Kenyans the toughest new kids on the block

By DAVID TOWNSEND

THE three new kids on the World Cup block are not expected to upset the big boys, or even cause them mild embarrassment, but their presence will be noticed.

The United Arab Emirates have already created debate over their predominantly Pakistani line-up. Holland's appearance after two near-misses will be cheered and the progress of Kenya must interest those keen to see the game expand globally.

It was with this latter aim in mind that the International Cricket Council (ICC) decided to expand the eight-team format of previous World Cups (nine in 1992, when South Africa were late entrants) to 12.

The associate members qualified through the 1994 ICC Trophy, which was held in Nairobi. The hosts lost an exciting final to the UAE, and Holland claimed the third place by defeating Bermuda in a play-off.

From the start of a tournament that included teams as diverse as Bangladesh, Gibraltar, Argentina and Hong Kong, there was widespread dissatisfaction about the formulation of the UAE squad.

The ICC's qualification rules deemed a player eligible to represent a country if he had lived there for the majority of the past four years. The UAE team learnt heavily on such imported talent, with all but one of their 16-man squad an immigrant worker in the Gulf.

Only Sultan Zarwani, the captain, was a natural national, with the balance consisting of nine Pakistanis, five Indians — including Riaz Poonawala, once twelfth man in a Test match — and a Sri Lankan. Zarwani's contribution on the field was minimal: in the final he bowled three loose overs of leg spin and was the only member of his side not to bat.

Vikram Kaul, the team manager and also an Indian, saw nothing wrong in the UAE complying with a set of rules that had no part in framing, but there was little celebration at his side's success and the ICC immediately began discussing new residential criteria.

By contrast, Holland's qualification, after twice finishing runners-up to Zimbabwe, was warmly applauded, not least because it is the last chance for

Steve Lubbers, their veteran captain, and Nolan Clarke, the remarkable 47-year-old former Barbados opener, to compete in cricket's top tournament.

Clarke's unbeaten century, which helped to clinch the last place in the finals, has given the Dutch a chance to exploit the television coverage that they have always thought necessary to promote the game in Europe.

With a change in residential qualification and the ageing of key players pointing to difficult times ahead for the UAE and Holland, it is Kenya who seem most likely to dominate the ICC associates.

While ICC officials privately look to the tradition, population and grassroots participation in Bangladesh to spawn a tenth Test-playing nation, it is not fanciful to suggest that, by 2010, the East Africans will have beaten them to it.

The reason for the rapid advance of cricket in Kenya is the increasing involvement of African players. In the past, the game was played almost exclusively by white settlers — Derek Pringle's father, Donald, played for East Africa in the 1975 World Cup — and by the minority Asian population.

Now, the Kenyan side is predominantly African, with its players copying West Indies with high-fives and flamboyant strokeplay from Steve Tikolo and Maurice Odundo. All that is missing is a lively pace quartet.

The ICC is taking a considerable gamble by including three new teams in the World Cup. While Zimbabwe did, famously, beat Australia by 13 runs to win their first World Cup encounter in 1983, 18 consecutive defeats followed until victory over England in 1992. East Africa failed to make an impression in 1975 and Canada's outing in 1979 produced the then lowest total in a one-day international — 45 against England.

There is enough experience in the three squads to avoid similar embarrassment this time, but a series of one-sided thrashings in the group matches may lead the ICC to a rethink for the future.

WHO PLAYS WHERE AND WHEN

GROUP A

India
West Indies
Sri Lanka
Zimbabwe
Kenya

GROUP B

Pakistan
England
New Zealand
South Africa
Holland
United Arab Emirates

QUARTER-FINALS

Mar 9 Winner group A v fourth group B, Faisalabad, Pakistan (04.00)

Mar 9 Third group A v runner-up group B, Bangalore, India (04.00)

Mar 11 Winner group B v fourth group A, Karachi, Pakistan (04.00)

Mar 11 Third group B v runner-up group A, Madras, India (04.00)

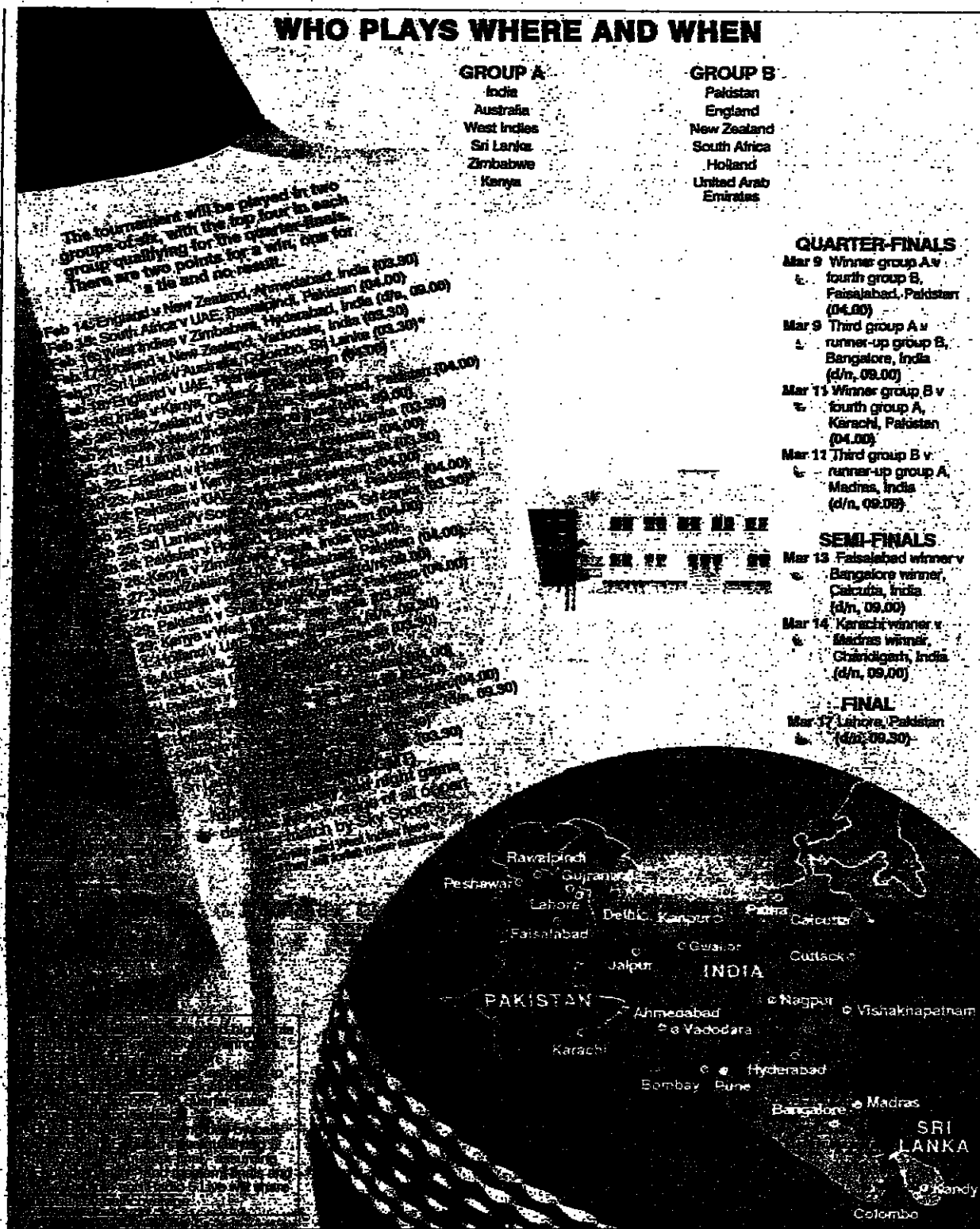
SEMI-FINALS

Mar 13 Faisalabad winner v Bangalore winner, Faisalabad, India (04.00)

Mar 14 Karachi winner v Madras winner, Chennai, India (04.00)

FINAL

Mar 17 Winner v Runner-up, Faisalabad, Pakistan (04.00)



WORLD CUP RECORDS 1975-92

MOST RUNS		
1029	1975	West Indies beat Australia by 17 runs
1013	1979	West Indies beat England by 82 runs
897	1983	India beat West Indies by 43 runs
880	1987	Australia beat England by 7 runs
854	1992	Pakistan beat England by 22 runs
815		
808	181 V A Richards	West Indies v Sri Lanka (Kolkata)
809	175 Kapil Dev	India v Zimbabwe (Tunbridge Wells)
805	171 G M Turner	Australia v New Zealand (Hyderabad)
658	141 D I Houghton	West Indies v England (Lord's)
	138 V A Richards	England v India (Lord's)
	137 D L Amiss	England v New Zealand (Trent Bridge)
	131 K W R Fletcher	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)
	130 D I Gower	Australia v New Zealand (Chandigarh)
	128 G R Marsh	Australia v New Zealand (Chandigarh)
	118 Raza Raza	
MOST WICKETS		
34	Imran Khan (Pakistan)	
30	I T Botham (England)	
26	Kapil Dev (India)	
26	A M E Roberts (West Indies)	
26	C J McDermott (Australia)	
25	Wasim Akram (Pakistan)	
24	Abdul Qadir (Pakistan)	
23	P A J DeFreitas (England)	
22	R J Hadlee (New Zealand)	
22	Maden Lal (India)	
MOST MATCHES		
26	Imran Khan (Pakistan)	
26	Javed Miandad (Pakistan)	
26	Kapil Dev (India)	
25	D L Amiss (England)	
25	V A Richards (West Indies)	
23	I V A Richards (West Indies)	
23	K Srikanth (India)	
22	LT Botham (England)	
21	G A Gooch (England)	
21	M D Crowe (New Zealand)	
WINNERS		
1975	West Indies beat Australia by 17 runs	Lord's
1979	West Indies beat England by 82 runs	Lord's
1983	India beat West Indies by 43 runs	Calcutta
1987	Australia beat England by 7 runs	Melbourne
1992	Pakistan beat England by 22 runs	
HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES		
181 V A Richards	West Indies v Sri Lanka (Kolkata)	1987
175 Kapil Dev	India v Zimbabwe (Tunbridge Wells)	1983
171 G M Turner	Australia v New Zealand (Hyderabad)	1987
141 D I Houghton	West Indies v England (Lord's)	1979
138 V A Richards	England v India (Lord's)	1975
137 D L Amiss	England v New Zealand (Trent Bridge)	1979
131 K W R Fletcher	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)	1987
130 D I Gower	Australia v New Zealand (Chandigarh)	1987
128 G R Marsh	Australia v New Zealand (Chandigarh)	1987
118 Raza Raza		
BEST INDIVIDUAL BOWLING		
7-51 W W Davis	West Indies v Australia (Pleasanton)	1983
6-14 G J Gifford	Australia v England (Pleasanton)	1975
6-39 K M Walcott	Australia v New Zealand (Trent Bridge)	1987
5-21 A G Hirst	Australia v Canada (Edgbaston)	1979
5-25 R J Hadlee	New Zealand v Sri Lanka (Bristol)	1983
5-32 A L F de Mel	Sri Lanka v New Zealand (Derby)	1983
5-34 D K Lillee	Australia v Pakistan (Pleasanton)	1975
5-38 J Garner	West Indies v England (Lord's)	1979
5-38 A J F de Mel	Sri Lanka v Pakistan (Pleasanton)	1987
5-39 V J Marks	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)	1987
HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS		
380-4	West Indies v Sri Lanka (Kolkata)	1987
338-5	Pakistan v Sri Lanka (Samarat)	1983
334-4	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)	1975
330-6	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)	1987
HAT-TRICK		
C Sharma	India v New Zealand (Madurai)	1987
HIGHEST WINNING TOTAL BATTING SECOND		
313-7	Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe (New Plymouth)	1992
310-4	Zimbabwe v Sri Lanka (New Plymouth)	1992
289-9	Sri Lanka v Pakistan (Samarat)	1983
HIGHEST LOSING TOTALS		
45	Canada v England (Old Trafford)	1979
24	Pakistan v England (Samarat)	1983
86	Sri Lanka v West Indies (Old Trafford)	1975
LOWEST INNINGS TOTALS		
202 runs	England beat India (Lord's)	1975
166 runs	England beat East Africa (Edgbaston)	1975
18 wickets	India beat East Africa (Lord's)	1975
10 wickets	West Indies beat Zimbabwe (Edgbaston)	1983
10 wickets	West Indies beat Pakistan (Melbourne)	1983
WIDEST MARGINS OF VICTORY		
1 run	Australia beat India (Madurai)	1987
1 wicket	West Indies beat Pakistan (Edgbaston)	1975
1 wicket	Pakistan beat West Indies (Old Trafford)	1975
WIDEST MARGINS OF VICTORY		
202 runs	England beat India (Lord's)	1975
166 runs	England beat East Africa (Edgbaston)	1975
18 wickets	India beat East Africa (Lord's)	1975
10 wickets	West Indies beat Zimbabwe (Edgbaston)	1983
10 wickets	West Indies beat Pakistan (Melbourne)	1983
NARROWEST MARGINS OF VICTORY		
1 run	Australia beat India (Madurai)	1987
1 wicket	West Indies beat Pakistan (Edgbaston)	1975
1 wicket	Pakistan beat West Indies (Old Trafford)	1975
HIGHEST MATCH AGGREGATES		
625-14	Pakistan v Sri Lanka (Samarat)	1983
625-11	Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe (New Plymouth)	1992
619-19	England v Sri Lanka (Tunbridge Wells)	1987

Atherton the rock on which to build

Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, runs the rule over the squad bearing England's hopes

Michael Atherton

A first World Cup for Atherton (right) and a chance to show he is more than a five-day blocker. The ideal anchorman, England will want him to bat for most of an innings — so nothing new here. Tactically rigid for one-day cricket, but now fully and rightly respected as captain and must hold on to the job whatever happens here.

Alec Stewart

Lost his form in South Africa, when his feet were out of tune with his brain. Capable of thrilling one-day innings, although Oval-trained and may struggle for fluency on slow Asian pitches. Could keep wicket, though Russell's form suggests he will not.

Graeme Hick

A natural No 3 for instant cricket and should be used there. Batted more commandingly than his figures showed in South Africa, not least because he refused at last. Has far more to offer and, with useful off spin and brilliant outfielding, could be thought the most complete one-day player in the world.

Robin Smith

No longer the brawny dasher of old, Smith (above) can look an anguished figure at the crease these days and is no certainty to make the final XI, even if he recovers from injury. He has the experience to be an important player, though, and could open if Stewart fails.

Graham Thorpe

Found his form all too late in South Africa but this could be his stage if he gets over his habitually neurotic starts. Fluent, confident and, importantly, left-handed.

Neil Fairbrother

A one-off. Of no use in Test cricket but indispensable for a one-day series in which he angles and squeezes the ball to unlikely, unguarded areas. England's top-scorer and best fielder in the 1992 final but not quite the same force now.

Craig White

On his form hangs Raymond Illingworth's reputation. An odd selection, after a poor A-team tour and, with Dermot Reeve omitted, neither his batting nor bowling seem suited to likely conditions. Popular team man but little form to match.



Jack Russell

Demanding inclusion with his tricky, adaptable batting in South Africa. His wicketkeeping inspires confidence and his new maturity, bordering on the gregarious, makes him the ideal senior professional.

Neil Smith

Fine temperament, as befits the son of M J K, and as capable of big hitting in the closing overs as he is of a telling spell of off spin. Not the best of fielders but could be more than an also-ran.

Dominic Cork

Keeps rising to each new challenge, a man born for the big occasion. Will love the crowds and adulation and, if he keeps the theatricals under control, will be England's best bowler again.

Darren Gough

The action, nip and late swing were encouragingly restored during the South African one-day series after a troubled year. If he holds it together, and remains fit, he is a match-winner.

Peter Martin

Made giant strides in South Africa, where the captain's confidence in him was vital. A little too gentle to be a serious bowler, even with his size, but swings the ball late and should be effective on slow pitches.

Phillip DeFreitas

The only man in the squad to have played in two previous World Cups (and finals), but his career is a tale of unfulfillment and inconsistency. Still an effective bowler when in the mood but should make more runs.

Richard Illingworth

Has learnt the virtues of flight and become a more rounded bowler for it. Metronomic and economical, Illingworth (below) will start as senior spinner but may find he is competing with Neil Smith for a place.



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NO TURNING BACK

WORLD CUP SQUADS: ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL FACTS AND FIGURES

ENGLAND

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
M A Atherton (Lancashire, 27, capt)	31	31	1214	127	41.86	1	9	10
D G Cork (Durham, 24)	14	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
P A J DeFreitas (Durham, 29)	97	64	23	601	49	14.65	26	1
N H Fairbrother (Lancashire, 32)	51	49	11	1451	113	38.18	11	22
D Gough (Yorkshire, 25)	16	12	3	93	43	10.33	3	1
G A Hick (Worcestershire, 29)	54	53	6	1770	107	37.65	14	28
P J Martin (Lancashire, 27)	21	9	3	64	14	10.55	1	1
P C Russell (Gloucestershire, 32, wk)	7	5	4	21	6	31.00	0	1
N M K Smith (Worcestershire, 28)	31	24	7	354	50	20.82	1	32
R A Smith (Hampshire, 32)	2	1	0	3	3	3.00	0	0
S J Storer (Somerset, 32)	69	68	8	2319	167	38.63	4	25
G R Thorpe (Surrey, 30)	68	63	5	1796	103	30.96	12	65
C White (Yorkshire, 26)	15	19	1	586	89	32.55	5	10
	8	7	0	100	34	14.28	0	0

Bowling

O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	Sw	Econ
D G Cork	142	11	608	21	28.95	3-27	4.28
P A J DeFreitas	901	5	106	2553	109	32.59	4.38
N H Fairbrother	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
D Gough	151	4	12	551	28	19.67	5.44
G A Hick	120	4	577	15	38.46	3-41	4.80
R K Illingworth	210	1	9	85	26	34.03	3.33
P J Martin	61	2	5	251	13	20.07	4.44
N M K Smith	12	0	55	2	27.50	2-46	4.58
C White	57	1	5	242	8	30.25	2.18

INDIA

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
M Azharuddin (Hyderabad, 33, capt)	199	184	35	5400	108	36.24	3	30
S A Aravind (Bengaluru, 27)	14	8	4	14	7	3.50	0	0
A D Jadeja (Bengaluru, 24)	42	38	3	1186	104	33.31	1	7
V G Kamble (Bengaluru, 24)	61	57	14	1741	100	40.48	1	10
A R Kapoor (Bengaluru, 24)	7	1	0	6	6	6.00	0	0
A Kumble (Bengaluru, 24)	71	30	11	171	24	9.00	0	21
S V Manjrekar (Bengaluru, 30)	69	55	9	1804	103	34.86	1	12
N R Mongia (Bengaluru, 26, wk)	31	16	8	229	40	23.50	4	12
M Prabhakar (Delhi, 32)	125	34	20	1844	106	54.91	2	11
V Prasad (Karnataka, 29)	24	6	2	9	5	2.25	0	0
S L V Raju (Hyderabad, 26)	42	12	5	29	8	4.14	0	7
N S Sidhu (Punjab, 32)	99	8	3	3467	143	42.83	5	28
Srinath (Karnataka, 26)	62	34	14	176	37	8.80	0	12
S R Tendulkar (Bengaluru, 22)	101	98	10	3201	115	35.37	4	22

Bowling

O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	Sw	Econ
M Azharuddin	1669	4	126	6381	282	22.27	5.15
Aamer Sohail	478	1	9	2079	89	35.23	4.22
Aravind	101	3	8	12	14	10.28	2
Ata-ur-Rahman	215	5	7	980	21	46.89	3.32
Javed Miandad	63	1	2	2	3	91.86	3.31
Imran-ul-Haq	54	0	42	2	21.00	1-4	4.38
Imran-ul-Haq	72	4	287	7	42.42	3-32	4.08
Ramiz Raja	753	3	38	2295	99	53.28	3.14
Srinath	25	1	130	3	43.33	1-9	10.00
Saved Arwar	369	2	8	1808	55	32.87	5.35
Selam Malik	39	3	113	8	21.62	4-7	4.44
Sajjan Mushtaq	5	2	0	30	15.00	0	0
Waqar Younis	112	32	17	325	37	9.57	10

PAKISTAN

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
Wasim Akram (Pia, 29, capt)	193	148	28	1746	86	14.55	3	38
Aamer Sohail (Lahore, 29)	85	84	1	2822	134	32.31	3	17
Arif Javed (Islamabad, 29)	121	36	32	144	21	10.28	0	15
Ata-ur-Rahman (Lahore, 20)	25	9	5	27	11	8.75	0	10
Ijaz Ahmed (Pia, 27)	121	107	17	2331	124	25.56	4	24
Imran-ul-Haq (United Bank, 31)	96	85	13	3306	137	41.32	4	24
Javed Miandad (Habib Bank, 31)	228	215	40	7227	119	41.86	8	50
Mushtaq Ahmed (United Bank, 29)	90	47	18	263	26	9.05	0	19
Ramiz Raja (Lahore, 33)	170	163	13	2857	119	33.99	9	29
Saeed Latif (United Bank, 27, wk)	70	46	14	518	39	15.22	0	18
Saved Arwar (ADP, 27)	82	81	6	2540	131	38.86	8	19
Selam Malik (Habib Bank, 32)	214	184	28	5442	182	36.76	5	36
Sajjan Mushtaq (Pia, 19)	5	2	0	30	15.00	0	0	0
Waqar Younis (United Bank, 24)	112	32	17	325	37	9.57	10	0

Bowling

O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	Sw	Econ
Wasim Akram	1669	4	126	6381	282	22.27	5.15
Aamer Sohail	478	1	9	2079	89	35.23	4.22
Arif Javed	101	3	8	12	14	10.28	2
Ata-ur-Rahman	215	5	7	980	21	46.89	3.32
Javed Miandad	63	1	2	2	3	91.86	3.31
Imran-ul-Haq	54	0	42	2	21.00	1-4	4.38
Imran-ul-Haq	72	4	287	7	42.42	3-32	4.08
Ramiz Raja	753	3	38	2295	99	53.28	3.14
Srinath	25	1	130	3	43.33	1-9	10.00
Saved Arwar	369	2	8	1808	55	32.87	5.35
Selam Malik	39	3	113	8	21.62	4-7	4.44
Sajjan Mushtaq	5	2	0	30	15.00	0	0
Waqar Younis	112	32	17	325	37	9.57	10

AUSTRALIA

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
M A Taylor (NSW, 31, capt)	89	88	1	2824	97	33.34	25	47
M G Bevan (NSW, 29)	23	12	1	821	78	82.10	4	10
D W Fleming (Victoria, 29)	14	5	4	14	5	14.00	0	3
I A Healy (Queensland, 31, wk)	139	96	32	1496	56	23.37	4	108
S G Law (Queensland, 27)	14	14	1	385	10	28.61	1	2
S Lee (Tasmania, 27)	9	5	1	52	9	13.00	0	4
C J McDermott (Queensland, 30)	137	76	17	432	37	7.08	0	27
G S McGeach (NSW, 28)	44	17	7	26	10	3.71	0	4
R T Ponting (Tasmania, 21)	18	16	2	454	123	33.14	1	18
P R Ramage (Victoria, 28)	55	34	14	385	29	19.05	0	18
M J Slater (NSW, 25)	33	33	0	765	73	23.18	0	6
S K Warne (Victoria, 28)	82	25	8	240	55	14.11	0	17
M E Waugh (NSW, 30)	106	102	8	3844	130	34.51	5	27
S R Waugh (NSW, 30)	189	189	40	3990	102	30.55	1	18

	M	W	NO Runs	100	Avg	100	50	40	30	20	10	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	0
L R Gannon (Canterbury, 27, cap & wk)	17	17	1	582	120	36.37	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
M J Rudge (Canterbury, 24)	17	17	1	582	120	36.37	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
C J Cairns (Canterbury, 26)	17	17	1	582	120	36.37	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
P R Ramage (Canterbury, 22)	17	17	1	582	120	36.37	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
C J Harris (Canterbury, 26)	17	17	1	582	120	36.37	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
G J Mowley (Cgo, 35)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
G J Mowley (Canterbury, 22)	2	1	1	8	8														
G R Lensen (Wellington, 33)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
D J Morrison (Auckland, 30)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
D J Morrison (Auckland, 30)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
D J Morrison (Auckland, 30)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
A C Pearson (Auckland, 26)	56	50	14	844	89	22.44	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				

Batting and fielding

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
L K Gammon (Canterbury, 27, capt & wk)	13	8	0	97	40	12.12	0	0
N J Astle (Canterbury, 24)	17	17	1	589	102	27.33	1	14
S J Coles (Canterbury, 29)	37	36	3	984	90	29.81	0	14
S P Fleming (Canterbury, 29)	89	80	14	844	84	23.44	0	12
C Z Harris (Canterbury, 23)	2	1	1	8	8	8.00	0	0
R J Kennedy (Canterbury, 23)	78	49	20	444	27	17.78	0	17
G K Morrison (Canterbury, 30)	88	77	40	204	27	10.27	0	17
D J Nash (Canterbury, 24)	28	15	4	118	40	10.27	0	8
A C Pearce (Canterbury, 29)	45	4	9	1185	108	36.40	0	31
D J Penfold (Canterbury, 27)	56	44	0	40	11.84	0	0	19
C M Spoonman (Canterbury, 29)	45	4	0	145	48	25.00	0	14
S A Thompson (Canterbury, 27)	45	4	0	145	48	25.00	0	14
R G Twose (Canterbury, 27)	12	11	0	376	80	34.09	0	3

Bowling

O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	Sw	Econ
N J Astle	84	2	409	7	58.42	3-42	4.83
C L Cairns	14	1211	39	31.95	4-65	0	6.00
S P Fleming	407	2	1887	53	35.80	3-15	4.83
C Z Harris	19	0	124	0	0	0	6.52
R J Kennedy	682	62	2552	61	41.81	4-24	4.50
G R Lawson	688	48	2133	112	27.37	0	4.76
D N Nash	167	10	756	19	45.86	3-20	4.10
D N Patel	380	5	2804	35	45.62	3-24	4.45
S A Thompson	382	19	1945	37	36.35	3-14	4.45
R G Twose	29	2	136	4	34.75	2-31	4.78

Batting and fielding

M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St
M J Coles (Free State, 26, capt)	77	74	11	2263	112	35.82	2	12
P R Adams (Western Province, 19)	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
D J Cullinan (Transvaal, 29)	41	40	4	927	70	26.75	0	15
P de Villiers (N Transvaal, 21)	82	72	12	123	20	8.20	0	12
A A Donald (Free State, 29)	57	18	10	34	7	4.25	0	13
A C Hudson (Free State, 29)	60	59	0	1724	108	29.05	1	1
G Krieger (Western Province, 29)	35	35	3	1148	77	27.66	0	1
G Krieger (Western Province, 29)	35	35	3	1148	77	27.66	0	1
C R Matthews (Western Province, 30)	43	19	6	124	26	9.13	0	28
B M Macmillan (Western Province, 29)	87	25	11	386	127	27.18	1	28
S J Phillips (Western Province, 25, wk)	1	1	0	10	10.00	0	0	1
S M Pollock (Free State, 29)	7	6	3	98	66	32.00	0	6
J M Rhodes (Free State, 29)	76	72	10	1745	88	26.14	0	27
P L Symcox (Free State, 29)	18	15	2	113	36	8.89	0	6

J N Rhodes (capt, 35)	19	15	2	113	36	6.80	—	6	—
P L Symcox (capt, 35)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	Sw	Econ
W J Coles	431	3	17	1800	54	33.33	5-32	4.17
P R Adams	20	2	8	4	16.50	3-28	3.46	—
P de Villiers	510	2	269	81	25.54	5-29	4.05	—
A A Donald	510	2	269	81	25.54	5-29	4.05	—
J M Kallis	11	0	50	0	—	—	—	4.54
G Krieger	2	0	10	0	—	—	—	7.00
C K Matthews	352	45	1588	65	23.60	—	—	4.50
S M Mchellin	87	1	17	1652	27.54	4-32	3.28	—
C B Macmillan	55.1	6	219	13	16.30	4-34	3.28	—
P L Symcox	149	7	59	18	28.11	3-20	3.25	—

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THE TIMES

CRICKET WORLD CUP

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Who will follow Clive Lloyd, left, who led West Indies to victory in 1975 and 1979, Kapil Dev, of India, victorious in 1983, Allan Border, who captained Australia in 1987, and Imran Khan, Pakistan's unifying force four years ago?

Riches in store after the ridicule

THE sixth cricket World Cup has attracted ridicule and condemnation in its run-up but it is on the delivery that it must be judged. Out of a jungle of political tension, logistical chaos and administrative brinkmanship, there just might emerge a memorable sporting competition, one that does justice to the largest gathering of leading cricketing countries in the game's history.

Given what has already occurred, a complete shambles seems the likelier outcome, but to denounce in advance is to forget that the nations staging the tournament live, by nature, on the edge. Their organisation of sporting events habitually bewilders by producing what, at the eleventh hour, had seemed impossible. They may astound everyone by doing so again.

No one should underestimate what is at stake for India and Pakistan. With revenue from the event likely to reach £40 million, the joint hosts share all profits after the prize-money (£200,000) and statutory guarantees to competing nations have been met. Sri Lanka, who did not commit any money at the bidding stage, are not entitled to any of the profits, making them, with the developments of the past week, losers all round.

There is political capital to be made out of successfully staging such a competition, too, and the wonder of it is that this can be shared equally by two nations who, off the cricket field, are seldom far from a state of war with each other. The possibility of them being drawn together at the knockout stage of the cup is not altogether an

attractive one. It was as recently as 1987 that India and Pakistan last combined as the venue for the World Cup and, despite a background of tension relating to the South African ties of some England players, it passed off smoothly.

The present event, which starts on Wednesday, is more ambitious, involving 12 teams rather than the eight who took part in 1987 and nine in 1992. The method of accommodating the extra sides is dubious, giving the impression that the three weeks of qualifying games are largely irrelevant to the knockout rounds which follow. It is the introduction of a quarter-final round that is crucial, for it means that only one Test-playing country, in all probability Zimbabwe, need



Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, hopes for the best from a tournament that has been plagued by political tension and administrative chaos before a ball has been bowled

be eliminated after 30 group games. This ludicrously long-winded process suffers by comparison with the method used in Australia four years ago, when all the teams played each other in a round-robin format, the top four proceeding to the semi-finals. It was thought that this would take an impracticable time with 12 sides, though India's insistence on staging all 17 of its group games on different grounds, thus adding to the travelling complexities, has hardly helped.

The comfort zone produced by the new rules contributed to the stance adopted by Australia and West Indies over playing in Sri Lanka. Safety concerns notwithstanding, they knew they could still qualify for the last eight after conceding a match, as long as they both beat Zimbabwe and Kenya and pick up one other victory each. England, theoretically, are in an easier group, as it includes Holland and the United Arab Emirates. Tempting providence, it is difficult

to envisage even England losing to these ICC associate member nations. But then similar things were said about Zimbabwe in 1992 and England were beaten by them.

Do not dismiss England's prospects of winning the cup. Dismiss, instead, the evidence of their wretched one-day performances at the far-end of their South African tour when, by the admission even of those involved, their eye had strayed from the ball. They are a better limited-overs side than that

and, in Graeme Hick, Dominic Cork and, one hopes, a resurgent Darren Gough, they could have some of the key players of the tournament.

Australia's status as favourites has been eroded, not by their playing form, which continues to be imperious, but their evident mental frailty over the security issue. While they are the best team in the world, they can be beaten in these circumstances.

West Indies, who won the first two World Cups and, to general astonishment, lost in the final of the third, have not reached the last four in either of the two most recent tournaments and it will be a mild surprise if they do so here. If Brian Lara is mentally attuned, they can

chase any target, of course, but their bowling attack is not ideally designed for limited-overs cricket and their batting, without Carl Hooper, is fragile.

New Zealand were the revelation of the 1992 event, moulding an inventive game-plan to predictably slow home pitches. They will try similar tactics here but the inspiration of Martin Crowe will be missed. South Africa have a better chance, for their fielding will be outstanding, their batting durable and their fast bowling probably peerless. Of the visiting nations, I make them favourites.

Of the three hosts, Sri Lanka have turned in some good recent results but will not, ultimately, have the necessary depth, while Pakistan, the holders, are capable of great heights and dismal depths on consecutive days, but will suffer for poor fielding and perhaps the pressures of home support. They have not found harmony as a team since the departure of Imran Khan and it is hard to see how the latest return of Javed Miandad can help.

India, who will use three spin bowlers and boast the most attractive batting of any side, are my idea of the likeliest winners. They have a settled captain in Mohammad Azharuddin, a batting prince in Sachin Tendulkar and a match-winning leg-spin bowler in Anil Kumble. They have come a long way since their ineptitude in the inaugural World Cup match, 21 years ago, when they were so overawed by England's total of 334 that they batted as if playing for a draw. The coming five weeks will show just how far.

Rain rule might not prevent another farce

BY SIMON WILDE

IF THE organisers of the World Cup think their embarrassment will end with the dispute over Sri Lankan venues, they may be sadly mistaken. Let it rain, and then Filcom might wish the tournament had gone to England after all.

Rain is the bane of the one-day game. It means revised targets, claims of unfair treatment and misery all round, as the Australians know only too well after their "rain rule" was held up to ridicule during the last World Cup.

Then, the England-South Africa semi-final in Sydney descended into farce when rain stopped play for 12 minutes with South Africa needing 22 runs from 13 balls. That had promised to be a fair contest but the rules dictated that, on the resumption, the

target was an impossible 21 runs from one ball and England were handed a tame, and unsatisfactory, victory. The greatest nonsense, of course, was that there was no need to recalculate at all: if conditions permitted one ball more, why not 13?

That system has been abandoned but is the new one — based on a method devised by a South African schoolboy — devoid of potential embarrassment? Unfortunately not. It appears logical enough, drawing on a detailed mathematical analysis of one-day matches to attempt to establish what constitutes a revised target fair to both sides in any given situation, should rain intervene.

For example, Team A scores 250 in its 50 overs and Team B's reply is shortened by rain. If it is reduced to 25 overs, reference to the Target Score Calculation Chart issued to

all teams shows that they must score 66.7 per cent of Team A's total to win, which would mean a target of 167.

If Team B is limited to 30 overs, the chart says they must score 76 per cent of the original target (or 190 runs); if 40 overs, 90.7 per cent (227 runs). To constitute a match, the team batting second must receive at least 25 overs: if that cannot be done on the first day, a new match can be started on a second, reserve day.

So what would the loss of 12 balls have meant to South Africa at Sydney in 1992 under the new rule? Their target would have been reduced by 1.8 per cent, or four runs fewer than the 252 runs England scored, which sounds reasonable enough had South Africa known that from the start of their innings but, with the rain coming late, they would have still required 17 runs from that

final ball. The occasion would still have been a farce.

"This new method works distinctly against the team batting second when the overs are lost part of the way through their innings," Tony Lewis, a university mathematics lecturer who discussed an alternative system with the International Cricket Council (ICC), said. "It is only fair when the lost overs occur at the beginning of the second team's innings. It does not provide a fair target-setting procedure."

The ICC, the game's governing body, which has no direct control over the World Cup this year, has asked Lewis to present his system — which takes into account the stage of the innings that overs are lost and the number of wickets that have fallen — to its annual meeting this summer. But it might be too late to save Filcom's blushes.

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NO TURNING BACK

From old stagers to temperamental stars, fallen heroes to wronged men, the cast is strong

Differing types who will hit the headlines



Michael Henderson on the men who are likely to dominate the news during the tournament

The cricket World Cup is an admirable instrument for making fools of us all. Did India not win it in 1983, defending a total of 183 at Lord's against a West Indies team snuffing a third successive triumph? Four years later was it really Australia, then the rubbing-rags of cricket, who finished top? At the last competition, held in Australia and New Zealand, how did Pakistan overcome an appalling start to breast the tape?

They did, and the memory of that transformation must encourage the lesser-fancied teams as they prepare for the sixth World Cup, which begins this week. If Pakistan could sort themselves out, Michael Atherton will be telling his players, so can we. Finalists in 1979, 1987 and again four years ago, when Wasim Akram undid them in Melbourne with a startling exposition of swing bowling, England — yes, even the bunch who bent the knee to South Africa last month — are capable of winning the trophy.

The odd thing about the World Cup is that it has never been won by the host nation. This time there are three "home" countries, of whom India appear to have the best chance of success. Pakistan are still trying to regroup after 18 appalling months riven by mud-slinging and internal dissent. As for Sri Lanka, who are slowly emerging as a force in world cricket, their problems have less to do with the actual playing of the game than the political machinations they can hardly avoid.

So who can one expect to make the news in the coming month? The obvious candidates can sometimes be upstaged by the foot-soldiers. In 1992, Dipak Patel, the all-rounder transplanted from the Black Country to New Zealand, opened the bowling with his innocent off-twirl and helped his side score a tactical success. Limited-overs cricket dances to a different, more hectic tune than the first-class game and it can pay to bribe the band. Still, there are some lively characters for the headline-hunters to follow.

The old stager: Javed Miandad, Pakistan's senior citizen, at 38, has moved heaven and earth to get himself picked for this competition. Miandad has played in the previous five tournaments but the seriousness of his leg injury means he cannot be fully fit. The old crock wants to go out in a blaze of glory. It is asking a lot.

The temperamental star: in the past six months Brian Lara has become the prince of pouters. The West Indies management has been exceedingly generous to him, given his

truculence and the overt way he seeks to succeed Richie Richardson as captain. For all that, he is a great batsman.

The king of the world: Sachin Tendulkar has the talent and the home comforts to impose himself on the tournament. Although he seems to have been around for ages, India's leading batsman is only 22, four years younger than Lara, and has not yet outgrown his original cap size.

The wronged man: Muttiah Muralitharan, the Sri Lanka off-spinner, was humiliated during the recent Test against Australia in Melbourne when Darrell Hair, the home umpire, no-balled him seven times for throwing. His performance will be an important sub-plot as the story unfolds.

The fallen man: much depends on Salim Malik's batting if Pakistan are to translate their raw talent into achievement. Salim will always be associated in people's minds

with the great bribery row that surfaced last year when Shane Warne and Mark Waugh alleged he had tried to buy them off. Like Javed, his time is almost up.

The stars-in-waiting: Shaun Pollock impressed mightily for South Africa during the recent Test series victory over England, bowling fast with the new ball and making valuable runs down the order. He is already an important member of a strong team. Likewise, Dominic Cork has secured his place in England's side and, provided his knees stand up, he should excel.

The stricken captain: Richie Richardson's meter has not got many more miles to clock. The West Indies captain leads a rocky ship and the crew's loyalty is not certain. A decent man, Richardson has presided over the decline of a team that appears increasingly fallible.

The best bowler: Shane Warne, the wrist spinner who is the brightest star in cricket's firmament, ahead of Tendulkar and Lara, gives Australia a matchless advantage. Yet he may be the focus of unwelcome attention in Pakistan after the Salim allegations. Another wrist spinner, Anil Kumble, of India, should do well in conditions he knows. Among the faster bowlers, Allan Donald, of South Africa, and (if he is not too busy sulking) Curtly Ambrose, of West Indies, should get most out of the slow pitches.

The fastest-century maker: given Michael Slater's natural aggression and the rules that forbid more than two men beyond the circle for the first 15 overs of an innings, the Australian opener will not lack opportunity. Along with Tendulkar, he could be the chief pleasure-giver of the tournament.



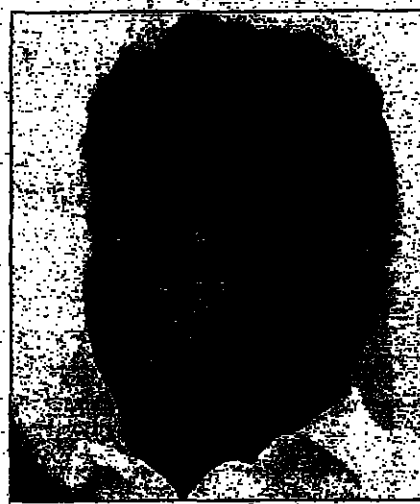
Muralitharan's action will again be scrutinised after the recent chucking controversy in Australia



The appeal of Warne, left, should not be diminished by the limited-overs context. Pollock emerged triumphant in the Test series against England



Tendulkar, a king among batsmen



Salim: cleared but running out of time



Lara: brilliance matched by truculence

Television channels plugging into new territory

By Ivo Tennant

THE sixth World Cup is to be covered more extensively on television and radio than any in the past. A cargo plane, will ferry 40 tonnes of equipment and innumerable technicians around the sub-continent to enable Sky to show more than 200 hours of live cricket.

The BBC has reached an agreement with Sky to televise highlights and Today: the current affairs radio programme, will, on certain days, make way for ball-by-ball coverage.

Over the 33 days of competition, Sky Sports will show 29 matches in full plus highlights every evening. The 25 commentators will include Richie Benaud, Geoffrey Boycott — returning to the team after moving to radio for the England tour of South Africa — Tony Greig and Tony Lewis. Charles Colville, the presenter, will be based in the studio at Isleworth, interviewing the likes of Angus Fraser and Dermot Reeve.

At each match Sky will use nine cameras, four slow-motion replay machines, one stump camera, one stump microphone and no fewer than 35 technicians.

Those matches restricted to highlights are on days when there are other live fixtures deemed to be more significant.

BBC Television is to



show highlights on ten evenings, starting with England's opening fixture against New Zealand on February 14, which will be on Sportsnight. All of England's matches, plus both semi-finals and the final, are to be covered on either Radio 4 long wave or Radio 5 Live. Jonathan Agnew, Peter Baxter and Mike Selvey form the core of the commentary team. John Barclay, the England assistant manager, might also be employed as a summariser.

"I aim to have a report on every match and have the rights to do the quarter-finals even if England do not qualify," Baxter, the producer, said. "Expectations of quality go up all the time but I can't afford an engineer — I'm doing that myself. I don't think I've done anything on such shaky ground before, yet we are aiming for a great deal of ball-by-ball coverage."

Of England's five qualifying matches, the three that take place on Sundays are to be broadcast on Radio 5 Live and the two on weekdays — their opening fixture and that against Holland on February 22 — on Radio 4 long wave.

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the commentators, who have to continue at their post without concern about bombs going off around them. Fortunately for Sky and BBC viewers, three of the hardest cricketers to have played the game have been assigned to Colombo: Benaud, Greig and the most doughty of all, Ian Chappell.

Shock treatments that add refinement to one-day game

By SIMON WILDE

IT IS all too easy for teams to allow one-day cricket to become too complicated. Talk of pinch-hitters, opening the bowling with spinners, and holding back strike bowlers can distract from the game's essentials. If you bat, bowl and field better than the opposition you will almost always come out on top.

That does not mean that there is not a considerable advantage to be gained by resorting to the unexpected, as New Zealand amply demonstrated during the last World Cup, in Australasia four years ago, when they flummoxed several opening batsmen

by giving the new ball to Dipak Patel, an off-spinner.

The role of the slow bowler may be different this time. On the hard, dusty pitches and outfield of the sub-continent, the ball will wear rapidly and they may be required to take it in the later stages of an innings, when it has nothing to offer most fast-medium bowlers.

Spin will undoubtedly play a key role in the competition. India and Sri Lanka, two of the three host teams, will rely more on slow bowling than any other sort, although a danger for all sides in the group matches is that many grounds have short boundaries, exposing those who flight the ball to

possibly unacceptable risks. Apart from anything else, the new ball might be put to better use. It is generally recognised that, when new, the white ball — which will be used in all matches — swings more than the traditional red one and this might be the time to use a medium-pace bowler who can control the ball.

Some bowlers, of course, can do too much. Dominic Cork, a natural swinger of the ball, is one, and England might be wise to hold him back until later in the innings. This is one reason why South Africa do not give the new ball to Allan Donald, quite apart from the fact that he is destructive enough to badly disrupt the middle period of a 50-

overs innings. The ball is also unlikely to deviate much off the seam. To escape heavy punishment, the fast-medium bowlers will need to move the ball in the air with control and vary their pace — bowlers of the type of Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, of Pakistan, Srinath, of India, McMillan, of South Africa, and Gough, of England.

When the World Cup was held last on the sub-continent, in 1987, sides batting first appeared to hold an advantage. Their opponents wilted under the heat and pressure and failed to reach their targets 19 times in 27 matches. This time, though, the climate will not be so hostile, as the competition is being

played in the region's spring, not its late summer.

A key battleground will be the first 15 overs of an innings, when all but two of the fielding side must be within the "ring". During the last World Cup, when this rule was also in force, some teams used specialist batsmen to hit over the top — Botham for England, Greatbatch for New Zealand.

The trend continues: By sometimes using Lara and Tendulkar as openers, West Indies and India have risked their best players in search of good starts. More recently, other sides have started to gamble with more "expedient" batsmen. It will be interesting to see which strategy works best.

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at every match